

NEWS

in brief

Settlers council joins struggle over Jerusalem

A formal decision to join the struggle over "Greater Jerusalem" was made at an executive council meeting held by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza yesterday.

According to council spokesman Yechiel Leiter the decision means that the council will become more publicly involved in issues concerning building in Jerusalem, such as the planned Har Homa neighborhood.

"There will be more activity on the streets," he said adding that the council had debated for some months whether to become involved in issues concerning Jerusalem. "We have been searching for some months for the right angle to pressure the government without adopting a confrontational stance," he added.

Margot Dukkevitch

Joint patrols resume in Tulkarm

Israel and the Palestinian Authority resumed joint military patrols yesterday in Tulkarm, the seventh and final city where patrols have been renewed since being halted following September's clashes in the territories.

On Sunday, joint patrols were resumed in Ramallah. This followed a resumption two months ago in Nablus and Kalkilya, and three months ago in Jericho and Jenin, and earlier in Bethlehem.

The resumption of the joint patrols in Tulkarm is especially significant since it was where two border policemen were shot and killed by their Palestinian counterparts on the patrols during the clashes.

Ariel O'Sullivan

FROM 1991 TO 1996, Peretz quit *Yedioth* and moved to *Ma'ariv*, which published details of these incidents, involving, among others, Jerusalem Mayor

ABOUT: FORMER JERUSALEM MAYOR AVNER SHAKI, FORMER TRANSPORT MINISTER YISRAEL KESSAR, FORMER ATTORNEY-GENERAL YOSIE HARISH AND OTHERS. SHAKI first told Haifa Radio

US airman Principal dies at Negev air base

By BATSHEVA TSUR

The Arab principal of the Jewish-Arab school in Neveh Shalom is not fit to serve as an educator, given remarks he made in an interview, the army said yesterday in Hadera. Born in Poland, Shivo immigrated here in 1924. During his journalism career, which began at *Davar* in 1929, he filed thousands of stories on news events and municipal issues. He also authored works about Hadera and problems at the Hissadrut. He retired in 1971, but remained active in pensioners' rights groups.

Jim

Immigration down 8% in 1996

The number of immigrants dropped by 8 percent last year compared with 1995, the Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday. Some 70,600 immigrants arrived last year, 83% of them from the former Soviet Union. Between 1989 and the end of 1996, 780,400 immigrants arrived in the country, 86% of them from the former Soviet Union.

Jerusalem Post Staff

Marzel's sentence reduced

In an agreement brokered by the Supreme Court, it was agreed to reduce a sentence given to former Kach activist Baruch Marzel from three months' imprisonment to three months of public service. Marzel had been given the sentence after being convicted of causing disorder in a courtroom. The charge related to his yelling "murderer" at Jerusalem Palestinian leader Faisal Hussein, when the latter came to testify at the trial of former Kach spokesman Noam Federman.

Jim

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

DORA NATHAN

The funeral will take place today, Tuesday, February 18, 1997, at 4:00 p.m. at the Avichail Cemetery.

Naste family

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

The President The Koret School of Veterinary Medicine mourn the passing of

Prof. CHARLES E. CORNELIUS

Co-founder of Israel's first and only veterinary school and head of the International Advisory Council of the Koret School

With deepest sorrow, we announce the untimely and tragic death of our beloved niece and nephew / cousins

ROBYN and MICHAEL BLOCK

in North Carolina, USA, on February 14, 1997. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to all the family in the USA, South Africa and Canada.

Colin and Sharon Block and family

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, brother, and grandfather

KURT PHILIPPSOHN

The funeral will take place today, Tuesday, February 18, 1997, at 1:30 p.m., at Hayarkon Cemetery.

Wife: Trude
Daughters: Hanna and Ben-Ami Spectorman and family
Naomi and Eri Heller and family
Brothers: Klaus and Gert Philippssohn and families



Old friends reunited

Dr. Josef Burg (left), a native of Saxony, Germany, is reunited yesterday with old friend Prof. Dr. Kurt Biedenkopf (right), prime minister of Saxony, as Bar-Ilan University President Prof. Moshe Kaveh looks on. The three were joined by Education Minister Zevulun Hammer and other dignitaries at the gala dedication of Bar-Ilan's Dr. Josef Burg Chair in Education for Human Values, Tolerance and Peace at the Tel Aviv Sheraton Hotel last night.

(Yosi Rali)

Grapes of Wrath monitors end deliberations

SLA positions come under heavy mortar attack

By DAVID RUDGE and news agencies

The Grapes of Wrath monitoring group concluded its deliberations yesterday on complaints by Israel and Lebanon over breaches of the understandings that ended the battles last April, as fighting continued in the security zone.

Reports from Lebanon said the committee, composed of representatives from America, France, Israel, Syria and Lebanon, once again called on the sides involved in the conflict to avoid endangering civilians.

Israel had complained about an incident two weeks ago in which Hizbullah had planted a chain of five explosive devices alongside a house in Beit Leif in the zone, which were discovered before they were detonated.

The understandings ban attacks inside or firing from villages or public facilities.

Lebanon complained to the group over the IAF raids last week on a Hizbullah-run radio station in the Bekaa Valley, in which two houses were damaged. Both sides maintained that the activities had endangered civilians.

The IDF Spokesman issued a statement last night, saying the monitoring group had determined that five explosive devices were planted in Beit Leif. Israel's representative to the committee insisted that the bombs had been planted by Hizbullah and had endangered civilians in the village.

The statement said the committee had agreed that during the course of the IAF strike on the

Hizbullah-run radio station, a shepherd had been wounded and property damaged in the vicinity.

The statement, however, said the committee has accepted Israel's contention that the radio station was not a civilian radio station as claimed by the Lebanese delegation.

The meeting of the monitoring group, established to supervise the understandings, took place amid heightened tension in south Lebanon in the wake of the air raids and continuing Hizbullah activities.

Two South Lebanese Army positions came under heavy mortar

fire yesterday evening, as the committee was still meeting at UNIFIL's headquarters in Nakoura.

There were no casualties in the long-range attacks on the outposts in the western and central sectors of the zone. IDF gunners returned fire.

Beirut radio stations reported earlier in the day that IDF gunners had blasted suspected Hizbullah targets north of the zone, in the region of Rashaf and Hadatha villages, and that IAF planes and drones had staged a series of low-level flights over many parts of south Lebanon.

The situation in south Lebanon was reportedly one of the main topics on the agenda in talks in Damascus yesterday afternoon between Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and a frail-looking Syrian President Hafez Assad.

According to reports, Hariri briefed Assad on his talks on Sunday in Paris with French President Jacques Chirac, who is leading French efforts to play a mediating role in the stalled peace process between Israel, Syria and Lebanon.

France has made it clear that it will not participate in any international peace-keeping force to replace the IDF if it were to withdraw from south Lebanon without an agreement with Syria and Lebanon.

Syria has been harshly critical of comments made by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu during his recent visit to the US and the warmth of the reception he was given there.

State-run newspapers in Damascus said Netanyahu had returned to his intransigent stance regarding the peace process and the ball was now in Israel's court. Syria's Ambassador to the US, Walid Muallem, however, also criticized reported comments by Netanyahu that Syria was preventing Israel from pulling out of south Lebanon by refusing to restrain and disarm Hizbullah.

Muallem was quoted in Lebanese newspapers as saying that if Israel wished to withdraw from south Lebanon all it had to do was comply with UN Security Council Resolution 425.

Peres: Syrians didn't meet our demands

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON — Labor Party leader Shimon Peres suggested in a speech in Washington Sunday night that as prime minister last year, he had agreed to return the entire Golan Heights but did not receive sufficient Syrian assurances on the quality of peace.

Peres told the annual gathering of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council that Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara has maintained that Peres and former premier Yitzhak Rabin were offering to withdraw from

the entire Golan.

"So he was asked by the Arabs: 'Why didn't you sign the peace, if this is the case?' — which is a legitimate question," Peres said. "The answer was: We have requests of our own. We would like to be sure that when somebody says land-for-peace, we shall get the peace, not only them getting the land. And on that, we have not only the right but the duty to insist."

Peres also said he did not see how the Syrians would accept anything less than what Egypt received under the Camp David accord.

Syria: Peace talks will need a century if they start from scratch

KUWAIT (AP) — Syria and Israel would need a century to conclude a treaty if negotiations started over from scratch, Syria's vice president was quoted as saying yesterday.

Israel broke off talks with Syria last year after a series of bombings blamed on Palestinian extremists.

Syria has said it is ready to resume the negotiations once Israel agrees to relinquish the Golan Heights.

Israel insists that talks begin without conditions, although the previous Israeli government reportedly came to an unwritten understanding with Syria to return the land. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, however, has said that agreement is not binding.

"When the Israeli government suggests returning to point zero, this means that we would have to stay in negotiations for a century," Vice President Abdul-Halim Khaddam told Kuwait's *Al-Rai Al-Amin* newspaper.

Whenever a new Israeli cabinet is formed, "we would have to go back to point zero," he said.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Hafez Assad yesterday met Iranian Defense Minister Mohammed Forouzandeh for talks on military cooperation.

Presidential spokesman Joubran Kourieh said Syrian Defense Minister Lieutenant-General Mustafa Tlas was present at the meeting at the presidential palace in the Syrian capital.

Forouzandeh, who arrived in Damascus on Thursday at the head of a military team, held talks with Prime Minister Mahmoud Zu'bi, Defense Minister Tlas and Lieutenant-General Hikmat Shihabi, chief of staff of the Syrian armed forces.

The Iranian minister expressed support for Syria in its confrontation with Israel during a tour of the Syrian side of the Golan Heights on Friday.

An official said the visit, in response to an invitation by Tlas, was aimed at holding talks on various military issues "but no arms deals or military agreements were discussed in particular during the talks."

CORRECTION

In Memory's Kitchen. A Legacy From the Women of Terezin, translated by Bianca Steiner Brown, was published by Jason Aronson, and not as reported in Friday's *Jerusalem Post*.

Poll: 74 percent want unilateral Lebanon pullout

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

There has been a significant increase in the number of Israelis who back a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon since the February 4 helicopter crash which killed 73 soldiers and officers, according to a poll conducted by Bar-Ilan University.

The poll, carried out from February 11-14, also saw a drastic increase in the number of people who believe the IDF, using its current method of operation, is incapable of defeating Hizbullah.

Those questioned were asked: "In your opinion, are the methods the IDF is using now able to defeat Hizbullah and other terrorist organizations in the continuing fighting in Lebanon?" Seventy-eight percent said no, compared with 65% in a similar poll conducted on

January 19-21.

Seventy-four percent said the IDF should unilaterally withdraw from Lebanon if more aggressive IDF actions bear no results. This was a 16% rise compared to the previous poll.

The poll questioned 1,052 Israeli adults including Jews and non-Jews and had a 3% margin of error.

"I believe that the difference was just because of the helicopter accident," said Dr. Ya'acov Katz, head of the institute for sociological research at Bar-Ilan's school of education which conducted the poll.

"From a psychological point of view it is a dangerous sign. It means that any unrelated issue can have serious bearing on matter of grave importance. People tend to put things together where there is no connection," Katz said.

PA-Israel civil affairs talks start

By JON HANAUER

The Israeli-Palestinian civil affairs committee started talks yesterday aimed at resolving remaining interim issues, focusing on environmental matters and establishing a timetable for negotiations.

Environment Ministry Director-General Nehama Ronen raised the matter of sewage disposal in Jenin and Hebron and offered a budget of NIS 80 million to solve this through joint processing plants. Ronen also complained about a planned flour mill in Gaza, but the Palestinians said they would use filters to cut the dust emission.

Palestinians say there are 34 remaining issues. However, they brought up new issues yesterday, including Israel's opening of a quarry in Wadi a-Teen, near Tulkarm, demolition of homes in area C, and briefly objected to the plans for the Har Homa neighborhood, in southeastern Jerusalem.

The Palestinians also requested permits for students to cross from Gaza to the West Bank, criticized obstacles to building in Hebron, and complained of agricultural produce rotting at terminals.

Yesterday's session was a farewell for government coordinator Maj.-Gen. Oren Shohar, who retires from the IDF this week to be replaced by Maj.-Gen. Ya'acov Orr.

The issues of the nine committees are expected to take at least several weeks to resolve, and include matters that were to have been resolved more than a year ago and in some cases, like safe passages, nearly three years ago.

Shohar said the two sides also mentioned the matter of the international passages at Allenby Bridge and Rafah.

The economics and financial affairs committee met last week under Palestinian Authority Planning Minister Nabil Shaath and Finance Minister Dan Meridor to discuss customs and excise taxes owed to the Palestinian Authority by Israel, as well as industrial projects and other cooperation projects.

Talks on safe passages between Gaza and the West Bank will be headed by Maj. Gen. Abdel-Razek Al-Yasei and the Internal Security Ministry. The passages were already included in maps with the 1994 Cairo Accords and signs have been placed at intervals along the routes, but implementation of the agreement has been delayed due to security fears.

The airport at Dahaniye is to be discussed by Fayer Zaidan, the PA Airports commissioner and OC Planning Branch Maj. Gen. Shaul Mofaz. The sea port in Gaza is also largely a security issue, and the committee is to be chaired by Mofaz and Sami Tarazi.

4 killed in road accidents

Three people were killed and one was critically injured early yesterday when their car overturned near Beersheba and caught fire. A five-year-old boy was also hit and killed in Tel Aviv.

The driver, 23, from the Beduin settlement Hura, got trapped in the car, while the other three, his friend, also 23, and two 18-year-old women from Beersheba were thrown out of the vehicle.

The accident occurred just after midnight near Yatir junction.

In the other fatal accident yesterday, five-year-old Ovadia Hai, of Tel Aviv, was hit by a car after getting off a school bus. As he crossed the street, he was hit either by the bus or a car driving behind the bus, said police.

(Jim)

Winning cards

In last night's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the queen of spades, the 10 of hearts, the jack of diamonds and the jack of clubs.

CORRECTION

The AACI's Annual Membership Meeting will take place on Wednesday at the Renaissance Jerusalem Hotel, and not as listed in *Jerusalem's Capital Calendar*.

AACI

مكتبة الأناجيل

Group demands Olmert suspension

The High Court of Justice yesterday heard a petition by Amital, the Movement for Quality Government, demanding that Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert suspend himself until his trial for alleged financial wrongdoing is complete.

The justices will examine the written material they were given and decide whether to make a decision without hearing oral arguments, or to summon the two sides to argue their cases.

Amital claimed in the petition that Olmert must suspend himself because he will not be able to run the city properly during the trial, which is being held in Tel Aviv District Court, which is expected to go on for six months to a year.

Amital also claimed that Olmert did not receive a mandate from the public to serve as mayor while on trial, since the charges brought



Ehud Olmert

against him only last year did not come up in the mayoral election. The group also said it is illogical for the law to require even low-level municipal employees to suspend themselves in such cases, but does not demand similar action by the mayor.

Olmert said in response to the petition that the law does not grant anyone the power to suspend the mayor because of legal action taken against him, and that four of five mayors that have been tried recently won their cases.

Those mayors were taken to court on charges related to their work as mayors, while Olmert is facing charges regarding his work as Likud treasurer in the 1988 elections.

The High Court, which is hearing the petition with an expanded panel of five justices, asked for an opinion regarding how long Olmert's trial is expected to last. The State Attorney's Office has said it would last six months, but according to an agreement reached by the sides in the case to limit the number of witnesses, Olmert's attorney now believes it can be concluded in two weeks. (Itim)



Rolling out the red carpet

Li Lanqing, vice president of the Council of the People's Republic of China, meets yesterday with Foreign Minister David Levy in Jerusalem. (Hass: Hapari)

Beit She'an factory remains closed despite new orders

By DAVID RUDGE

The Beit She'an Engines factory in the unemployment-stricken development town remained closed yesterday and its 35 workers on the dole, despite promises by the Defense Ministry to increase orders to the plant.

The factory, which overhauls engines of IDF vehicles, was shut two weeks ago due to insufficient orders and the employees were later issued dismissal notices. Demonstrations at the plant and subsequently opposite the Knesset brought about the intervention of Foreign Minister David Levy, himself a Beit She'an resident.

An agreement was reached with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai that additional orders would be given to the factory to save the workers' jobs.

The ministry issued a statement yesterday saying that it had placed orders for 246 engines to be overhauled and refurbished by the factory - 71 of them in the past two weeks. The announcement said Mordechai had informed Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz of the decision to increase orders to

the factory in coordination with its management and the chairman of the firm's board of directors. The latter are due to meet the Defense Ministry director-general next week. Furthermore, the statement said that it was Mordechai's policy to do everything possible to maintain the size and number of work orders to factories in development towns, despite budget cuts.

Beit She'an Histadrut branch chairman Pinni Kabalo maintained, however, that the orders were still not enough to keep the factory fully employed. Kabalo said the workers were officially classed as unemployed because they had received dismissal notices and management still intended to remove equipment and sell off its machines unless more orders were forthcoming. He maintained that the engines received for overhaul so far from the ministry were sufficient to keep the factory employed on a regular basis for two weeks, and the entire order of 246 motors for several months, but not longer. The workers plan to demonstrate opposite the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv tomorrow.

Dwarfism treatment may reduce heart disease risk

By JUDY SIEGEL

A hormone used experimentally to treat a locally discovered type of genetically transmitted dwarfism has been found to have additional properties that can reduce one of the important risk factors in cardiovascular diseases.

The discovery, published in the journal *Metabolism*, was made by Prof. Zvi Laron, one of the world's leading pediatric endocrinologists, of Tel Aviv University and the Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel (SCMCI) in Petah Tikva. The dwarfism was named for Laron in 1972, one of only two diseases named for an Israeli. Laron not only conducted research into it, but also discovered the cause and developed a treatment for it.

The drug he uses experimentally to treat Laron syndrome is insulin-like growth factor (IGF-I), a hormone produced by the liver which causes growth hormone produced by the pituitary gland to trigger growth of the bones and tissues.

It was first synthesized in 1986; three years later, Laron and his team were the first to use it for treating patients with the syndrome. The drug, manufactured for clinical studies in small quantities but not yet available on the open market, speeds up growth in Laron syndrome patients.

The main risks for cardiovascular diseases are smoking, obesity, dia-

betes, hereditary factors and high levels of cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood. But in recent years, another one was discovered that is unconnected to any of the others (except hereditary factors): the level of lipoprotein A (Lp(a)) in the blood. Rising above 300 milligrams per liter of blood signals a high risk for a heart attack.

Until recently, there have been no drugs to reduce the level of Lp(a) effectively and on a long-term basis. At the same time, scientists discovered factors that raise the level of Lp(a), such as insulin. The Laron team discovered properties of "their" hormone that had not been known until now: that it significantly reduces the level of Lp(a) parallel to the level of insulin.

In his current research, 10 patients (five adults and five children) suffering from the syndrome who were given the synthetic hormone showed significantly lowered levels of Lp(a). This finding, said the professor, "can contribute to the treatment of people at high risk for cardiovascular diseases and even to play a determining role in preventing these diseases."

It has also had an effect on non-insulin-dependent diabetics, "and there is hope that according to our new data, IGF-I will be accepted for this use and accepted as a drug to extend the life of diabetes patients."

Chief rabbi Lau receives invitation to visit Rwanda

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu has invited Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau to visit his country.

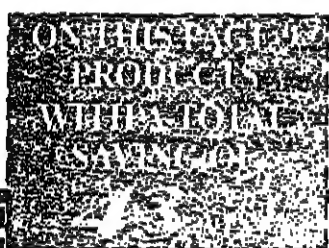
The invitation came after Lau last week expressed a desire for an international committee of spiritual leaders to help cope with human tragedies, such as in Rwanda, where thousands of refugees are starving to death on the border with Zaire. Bizimungu said Lau should come to Rwanda to organize such a committee. Lau made the sugges-

tion to Cardinal Edward Cassidy, head of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, who was visiting Israel to attend a symposium on the future of Jewish-Catholic relations, organized by the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel.

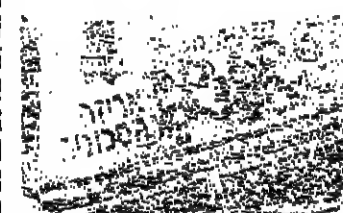
The Rwandan president conveyed the invitation via Jewish businessmen working in his country. One of the businessmen, Israel Weinstock, sent a cable to Lau indicating that Bizimungu intended to send an official invitation within a few weeks.

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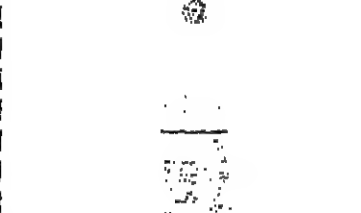
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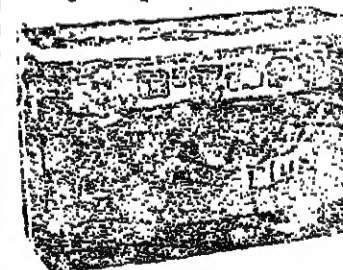
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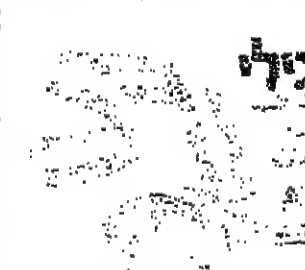
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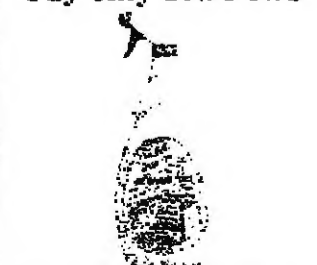
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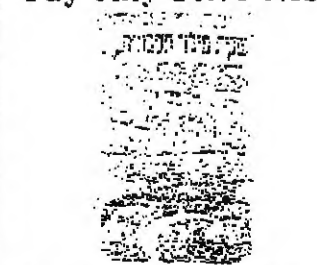
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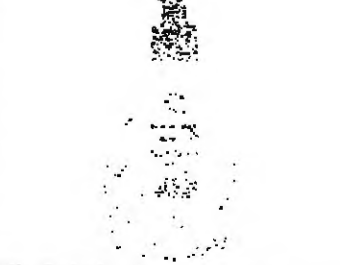
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Read my lips

Lithuanian couples kiss as they take part in a contest yesterday for the longest kiss in Vilnius. For several days in a row, the couples continued dancing and smooching, taking small breaks every once in a while. (Reuters)

Albright takes crusade for NATO to France

By PAUL TAYLOR

PARIS (Reuters) - US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright took her crusade for the enlargement of NATO yesterday to France, at odds with Washington over alliance commands and the path to a new relationship with Russia.

On her first foreign trip since taking office, Albright was keen to make a new start after a stormy patch in relations with the French, who resent what Paris officials call America's "velvet hegemony" in world affairs.

"Madeleine Albright wants to improve...the tone and quality of

the relationship. She believes we need to work very closely with France on European security issues and on regional issues like Africa," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

In a linguistic goodwill gesture, the new secretary began in French at a memorial tree-planting ceremony for the late US ambassador Pamela Harriman, who died in Paris this month.

But Albright, known for plain-speaking, offered no political olive branch before talks with President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Alain Juppe and Foreign Minister Herve de Charette.

In Rome, she backed Italy's opposition to a German-backed French idea for a "big five" summit in Paris on Russia's relations with NATO, US officials said.

She also made clear in a French newspaper interview that Washington remained totally opposed to French calls for the United States to hand over NATO's southern command, which controls the Mediterranean, to a European.

Paris has made this a condition for returning to the alliance's integrated military command, which it quit in 1966 in protest at US domination.

French leaders, determined to improve ties after last year's rows over NATO, the Middle East, Africa and leadership of the

United Nations, gave Albright a warm welcome, beginning with the body language. De Charette planted four kisses on her cheeks on the steps of the Elysee presidential palace.

"Surrounded by too timid partners, France could not continue its guerrilla war," commentator Charles Lambroschini wrote in the pro-government daily *Le Figaro*. "Aware that France often says aloud what Washington's best friends think quietly, the Americans too are looking to soothe ties." On the key aim of Albright's 11-day tour — the enlargement of NATO to admit former communist central and east European countries — France and Washington are in broad agreement.

S. Korea on alert over defector

BEIJING (Reuters) - North Korea said yesterday it would fire a top official marooned in South Korea's embassy in China if he sought asylum and Seoul went on alert for possible attack but said it wanted talks on the Cold War crisis.

Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry, commenting on the highest level defection yet from the Stalinist nation, saying that if leading ideologue Hwang Jang-yop had been kidnapped, then North Korea would take "decisive countermeasures."

"Our stand is simple and clear. If he was kidnapped, we cannot tolerate it and we will take decisive countermeasures," the KCNA news agency, monitored in Tokyo, quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying.

"If he sought asylum, it means that he is a renegade and he is dismissed," it said, adding that it had asked Beijing to investigate what it called the disappearance of Hwang, who took refuge in Seoul's mission in Beijing six days ago.

North Korea's ambassador was believed to have met officials at China's Foreign Ministry yesterday. Hwang's defection has embarrassed his hermit homeland, delighted Seoul and nixed Beijing in a quandary over how to usher him out of China without offending an old communist comrade or a new capitalist friend.

But Hwang turned 74 yesterday with no sign of progress to celebrate in his appeal for asylum in the South, and still stranded in Seoul's heavily guarded consulate in Beijing.

US Secretary of State Madeleine

Allbright voiced US concern over events on the Korean peninsula, saying they underlined the need for dialogue between rival North and South.

South Korea prepared for possible attacks by Pyongyang as the Cold War crisis escalated, but said confrontation over the defector would not scuttle its efforts for détente.

Another prominent defector, Li Il-nam, a nephew of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's ex-wife, remained in a coma after being shot and critically wounded at the weekend by suspected North Korean agents near Seoul.

Security around South Korea's ports, airports and other public places had been beefed up and 10,000 police and soldiers searched for the two suspected agents who shot Li.

Seoul Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha said problems stemming from Hwang's defection were just the start of headaches for Seoul because of a crisis in the North.

South Korea's security-related ministers have agreed that a desperate Pyongyang resort to attacks after Hwang, a top adviser to the North's Kim Jong-il, sought asylum.

Dour warnings from North Korean officials in Beijing of the consequences of any attempt to move Hwang to the South gave a hint of Pyongyang's willingness to retaliate.

"If they make him go to Seoul, I think there will be war," said one North Korean official who declined to be identified.

Troops sent to northeast India

GAUHATI, India (AP) — Soldiers with shoot to kill orders were flown to the northeast state of Tripura yesterday to reinforce troops sent to quell ethnic violence escalating in the region.

At least 35 people were killed in several weekend clashes, bringing the death toll over the past 10 days to at least 73, state officials said on condition of anonymity.

Nearly 20,000 people have taken shelter in camps set up by the government, the officials said. It was not clear what sparked the latest fighting between Bengali-speaking immigrants from neighboring Bangladesh and members of the area's indigenous tribes; the two sides have clashed intermittently for years.

The first soldiers arrived last week to back up police, and more were requested yesterday, according to the state government spokesman. He refused to say how many soldiers and police officers were patrolling the volatile region, or how many more had been called in.

Security forces were given special powers Sunday under the disturbed areas act that allow them to shoot to kill anyone suspected of contributing to the unrest.

Most of the victims of the recent attacks were Bengali immigrants. The indigenous people complain that they have become the minority in their homeland since the immigrants began arriving in the 1970s.

Tripura's population of nearly 3 million is 70 percent Bengali. Its capital, Agartala, is 1,200 km east of New Delhi.

Liz Taylor celebrates 65th birthday

By JENNIFER BOWLES

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Elizabeth Taylor has been honored at a star-studded bash celebrating her 65th birthday and benefiting an AIDS foundation days before she was scheduled to undergo brain surgery.

Actor Hugh Grant opened the show late Sunday night by introducing a retrospective of Miss Taylor's career and life.

"What a body of work — let's face it. What a body," the star of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* said, introducing the actress.

Miss Taylor, dressed in a green gown and coat, walked on stage and sat down beside her longtime pal, Michael Jackson.

Jackson, who escorted Miss Taylor along a "red carpet" into the theater, had written a song for her, *Elizabeth*. "Elizabeth, I love you, you're more than just a star to me," Jackson crooned.

Magician David Copperfield, Harry Connick Jr., Patti LaBelle, Rod Stewart, Kevin Bacon and the Bacon Brothers also were on hand to pay tribute.

Madonna, a surprise guest, gushed about how much she admired Miss Taylor's movie performances, especially *A Place in the Sun*.

"I adore Elizabeth Taylor in the movies, but the work she has done (for AIDS) in the past 12 years is what makes her a star," Madonna

said. Miss Taylor clapped, smiled and blew kisses from her place at the side of the stage. She said the event was not really a birthday celebration.



Elizabeth Taylor

"I'm here to celebrate all of the people in the world with AIDS," Miss Taylor said. "This function has enabled (her AIDS foundation) to go all over the world." The audience was treated with never-before-seen footage of the actress's life and a career that began at age 9 and garnered best actress Academy Awards for *Butterfield 8* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The black-tie benefit, "Happy Birthday,

Elizabeth — A Celebration of Life" raised more than \$1 million for the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation, which distributes money for AIDS research and treatment.

It was held at Hollywood's Pantages Theatre and was videotaped for a two-hour ABC special to air Feb. 24.

A block-long stretch of Hollywood Boulevard was renamed Elizabeth Taylor Way yesterday in honor of Miss Taylor's birthday celebration. Her actual birthday, though, is February 27.

Miss Taylor needs an operation to remove a benign brain tumor, the latest in a long series of health setbacks. Her surgery was originally planned for yesterday but was postponed for sometime this week because she still has lingering flu symptoms. No date has been set.

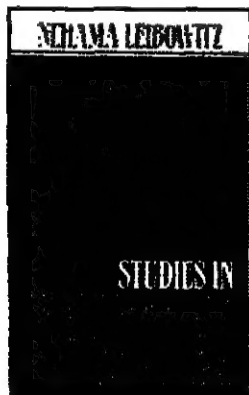
The tumor on the "lining of her left frontal lobe" was detected following an MRI brain scan during Miss Taylor's annual physical examination earlier this month. Her doctor expected a full recovery without complications, spokeswoman Maria Pignataro said.

Miss Taylor had both hips replaced in recent years, then had to return for hip-adjustment surgery in October 1995 because one of the operations left her with one leg shorter than the other.

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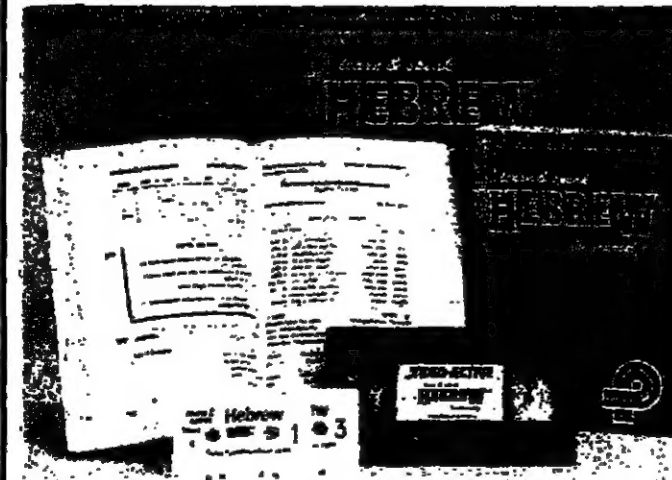
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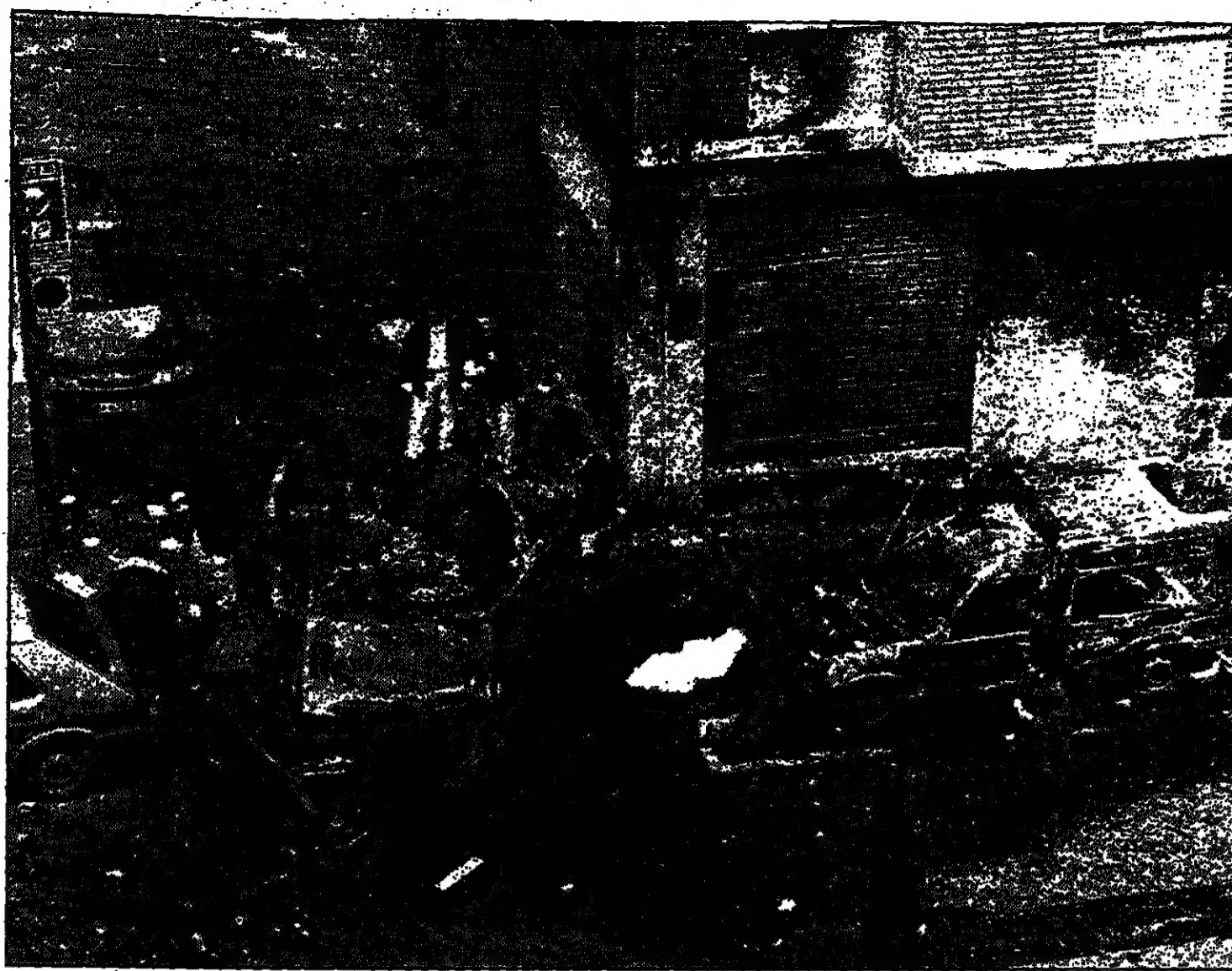
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Policemen and investigators search the scene after a car bomb exploded yesterday near a school in the Basque city of Bilbao. Basque ETA separatist rebels struck for the fourth time in a week, killing a policeman in the attack next to a school with 2,000 students, none of whom were hurt.

Car bomb kills Basque court guard

MADRID (Reuters) - Basque ETA separatist rebels struck with deadly force for the fourth time in a week in Spain yesterday, killing a policeman with a car bomb.

Basque court guard Modesto Rico Pasarin, 33, died instantly when a bomb attached to the bottom of his car exploded as he drove out of his garage in the northern Spanish city of Bilbao.

The car was enveloped in flames just five meters from a high school with 2,000 students, none of whom were hurt.

"We were in class as normal," said one of the students. "The explosion broke the classroom windows and when we looked out we saw the

car burning. The man was already dead." Politicians blamed the attack on the ETA - Basque Homeland and Freedom - which has killed 800 people in its 29-year drive for independence, four in the past week.

"This could have caused a massacre because it was just a few meters from a school," said Carlos Irujo, spokesman for the regional party of the ruling conservative Popular Party.

The killing brings to four the number of victims ETA has claimed just this week in a sharp escalation of violence.

A week ago a Supreme Court judge was gunned down outside his Madrid home hours after a powerful car bomb exploded in the

southern city of Granada, killing a civilian air-base worker and wounding seven.

The next day, ETA shot and killed a Basque businessman.

"This is the fruit of an irrational escalation of violence," said Inigo Urkullu, spokesman for the Basque Nationalist Party. "ETA is attempting to tear down and destroy its own country and turn it into a fiefdom of intolerance, hate and horror."

The Spanish government had feared a surge in separatist violence this year as ETA tried to reassert itself after a string of setbacks in 1996 that saw several top leaders arrested and a key attack foiled.

Zaire air attack kills six as UN seeks to halt war

By ARTHUR MALU-MALU

KINSHASA (Reuters) - Zaire's government yesterday rejected a cease-fire with rebels who have captured much of the country's east and launched air raids against a rebel-held town, killing at least six people in an eyewitness in the town said.

"The government stresses that it cannot accept a cease-fire with unidentified belligerents," Foreign Minister Kamanda wa Kamanda said in a statement issued just before he met UN special envoy Mohammed Sahnoun, who is trying to end the war.

At the same time, Zaire stepped up its counter-offensive against Tutsi-led rebels who have made large territorial conquests since taking up arms last October.

An aid worker in the rebel headquarters of Goma said three government jets bombed the rebel-held east Zairean city of Bukavu just after 4 p.m.

Another aid worker, speaking by telephone from Bukavu, said loud explosions echoed through Bukavu and panic-stricken residents ran for cover.

"Bukavu has just been bombed... My staff and I are sheltering in the basement. We can see people running back and forth looking for shelter," he said.

An aid worker in Bukavu who said he counted the dead and

wounded after the bombing raids at least six people were killed and some 20 wounded.

The government accuses the rebels of waging a proxy war for Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda - which deny involvement. The statement implied Zaire could consider a truce with the neighboring states.

"Any cease-fire with the regular armies of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi must be linked to the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Zaire," the statement said.

Zaire used the occasion of the UN mission to blame the world body for a threat by rebel leader Laurent Kabila to attack Tutsi Tutsi refugee camp near the city of Kisangani.

It said a statement by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan last week that Zaire was arming exiled Hutu hardliners among some 200,000 camp dwellers gave rebels the pretext to threaten a raid. UN officials said they saw Zairean military supplies being unloaded.

The Zaire government demands that the Security Council remove from Zairean territory all Rwandan refugees including ex-Rwandan soldiers and their militia allies, it added.

The war in eastern Zaire is intertwined with the ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda. The Hutu army and civil-

ian militias massacred up to 800,000 minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 1994 before fleeing en masse into Zaire.

Hutu hardliners in refugee camps in Zaire plotted revenge attacks on the Tutsi-led government that later took power in Rwanda, stoking tensions in the region.

Meanwhile, Zaire's ethnic-Tutsis took up arms in October after local authorities said they would expel them to their ancestral homeland in Rwanda.

The rebels went on to seize vast tracts of borderland, putting Zaire's rag-tag army to flight and forcing the government to recruit foreign mercenaries for a counter-attack.

Sahnoun, a veteran Algerian diplomat, is trying to untangle Africa's most complex running conflict on behalf of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

He met ailing President Mobutu Sese Seko, who is battling cancer at the same time as struggling to keep his 31-year hold on power in the vast Central African nation.

Sahnoun made no statement as he emerged from the talks with Kamanda, who is also a deputy prime minister. He then went to meet Defense Minister General Lukulika Bolongo before further talks with Prime Minister Kengo wa Dondo.

Tajik warlord frees all hostages

DUSHANBE (AP) - A Tajik warlord yesterday released all six remaining hostages, five of them UN workers, after talks with the nation's president, a UN spokesman said.

The citizens of Nigeria, Russia, Switzerland, Tajikistan and Ukraine were freed at 6:15 p.m. Moscow time, spokesman Miroslav Strugar told the ITAR-Tass news agency.

The hostages were released after Tajik President Emomali Rakhmonov ventured into the mountains east of the capital yesterday to negotiate personally with the warlord and convince him to end the two-week-old standoff without bloodshed.

Bakhran Sadirov, who had demanded direct talks with the president, sent two representatives and one of the hostages to meet Rakhmonov in a village near his base about 80 km east of the capital, Dushanbe.

It was unclear whether Sadirov joined the talks. Rakhmonov was taking the former hostages with him back to Dushanbe, ITAR-Tass said.

The warlord's spokesman, telephoned Russian news agencies earlier yesterday and promised the hostages would be freed regardless of the outcome of the talks.

A spokesman for the Tajik security ministry in Dushanbe said most of Sadirov's fighters moved deeper into the mountains yesterday in case they should come under attack during or after the hostage releases. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

Sadirov had held as many as 16 hostages since the crisis began Feb. 4, but then released 10. He continued to hold six: two UN military observers, three UN refugee workers, and Tajikistan's security minister.

The standoff had moved haltingly toward resolution for several days.

Sadirov had demanded the government pick up and deliver 40 of his fighters from bases in Afghanistan. On Saturday, 33 were handed over.

But one of Sadirov's commanders, Said-Murad Kiyamudnov, told the Interfax news agency that the warlord felt betrayed because the government did not return all 40 and seized the ammunition of those it did deliver.

On Sunday, the government tightened its cordon around Sadirov's base and threatened to use force. With the mediation of Russian officials, Sadirov agreed to release five of his remaining 11 hostages - three UN workers and two Russian journalists - in return for talks with the president.

Russia has 25,000 troops in Tajikistan, a former Soviet republic, to prop up the hard-line government against the mostly Muslim opposition. The troops also guard the country's border with Afghanistan, which Russia sees as a source of drugs, guns and Islamic fundamentalism.

This was Sadirov's second hostage-taking. In December, he seized 23 people, including nine UN workers. All were released unharmed.

Cigar diplomacy draws US celebs to Cuba

FORT LAUDERDALE - Cuba has secretly invited about 100 US business leaders and celebrities to a \$500-a-plate dinner in Havana next week to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the world-renowned Cohiba cigar, the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel reported yesterday.

As most Americans are prohibited from travelling to the communist-ruled island under a long-standing US trade embargo,

Cuban officials are tight-lipped on who is on the guest list.

But published reports say movie stars Jack Nicholson, Danny DeVito, Matt Dillon and Arnold Schwarzenegger may be among those invited.

A box of 25 Cohiba cigars, known as Fidel Castro's personal favorite until the Cuban leader stopped smoking a few years ago, costs more than \$800 in the United States, where Cuban cigars are banned.

The Cuban government will hold the dinner at Havana's famed Tropicana club on Feb. 28 to raise money for Cuba's health care system, the Sun-Sentinel reported. More than 600 guests throughout the world have been invited.

"To someone who smokes cigars it's like going to the Academy Awards," said Richard Sachs, a Boca Raton stockbroker who declined his invitation.

Gore draws veil over S. Africa row

CAPE TOWN (Reuters) - South Africa and the United States affirmed the strength of their relations yesterday, refusing to air in public a row over South African ties with Washington's list of "terrorist" states.

South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and US Vice-President Al Gore signed three accords after a meeting of their binational commission in Cape Town, the most important of them a treaty on double taxation.

Asked at a news conference if they had discussed public US objections to a proposed South African arms sale to Syria, Gore said: "Certain issues are best discussed in private." Mbeki added he was consulting various groups about the deal to provide Damascus with gun-aiming systems for its Soviet-supplied tanks but no final decision on the sale had been taken.

His remarks were more restrained than those of Defense Minister Joe Modise, who said at the public unveiling of South Africa's Rooivalk (Kestrel) combat helicopter outside Pretoria yesterday that the country would sell arms to whomever it chose.

Modise dismissed criticism of arms sales to Syria as being colored by pro-Israeli bias and reaffirmed South Africa's friendship with Iran, another state regarded as a pariah by the United States.

South Africa also has warm ties with Cuba and Libya. Gore said the binational commission, set up after apartheid was abolished with the holding of democratic elections in April 1994, "enhanced the two-way exchange between the deputy president and myself on the full range of issues that our two countries have to deal with."

At the start of the meeting,

Mbeki said South Africa and the United States had "occasional disagreements."

"But because our relationship is based on common ideals and respect of each other's sovereignty, we are able to resolve these differences cordially," he said.

Last month the United States warned South Africa it would cut all aid if the Syrian deal went ahead.

US officials said yesterday the \$600 million in aid originally offered for South Africa's first three years of transition was now in line to be extended to the year 2005. They gave no figures.

Gore said Washington was keen to cooperate with South Africa in boosting development throughout the continent.

"As we approach the 21st century, it is simply unacceptable to have a repetition of the overall pattern of the 20th century where

Africa was largely left out of the progress experienced by the world as a whole."

"If the world is going to be able to find some way to empower this continent... then South Africa, as the most advanced nation on the continent, will play the key role in the march toward progress," Gore said.

US Commerce Secretary William Daley, one of five cabinet secretaries travelling with Gore, said the tax treaty signed yesterday replaced one scrapped 10 years ago under anti-apartheid sanctions.

"This new treaty will facilitate increased flows of capital, goods and technology between the two countries as well as help lay the foundation for increased trade and investment that is critical to strengthening our important and growing commercial relationship," Daley said.

Thousands block Serb state building

BELGRADE (AP) - Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic faced a new wave of protests yesterday, with economic demands replacing political ones at the top of the agenda.

Transportation workers put the brakes on Belgrade's city buses, while teachers protested the government's attempt to quell their strike.

"We've had enough. We are starving while the regime squanders money on the police force," said Sofia Sirodovic, a 35-year-old high school literature teacher among the 5,000 who blocked a street in front of Serbia's main government building.

The three months of political protests have been suspended with Milosevic's decision to recognize opposition municipal election victories in Belgrade and 13 other cities and towns.

But the Serbian president has been left weaker than ever before. A wave of strikes and workers' protests could seriously challenge his rule.

Yet the victories have carried a bitter aftertaste for new local authorities faced with depleted city funds and skyrocketing unemployment.

Serbia's economy has been decimated by years of mismanagement and international sanctions imposed to punish Milosevic for fomenting the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. Factories are at a standstill and already low salaries in all sectors of economic life often are delayed for months.

In Kragujevac, a central Serbian city of 200,000 now controlled by

the opposition, the once profitable car industry is in ruins. Kragujevac Mayor Veroljub Stevanovic said that the Zastava car factory's workers were poised for a strike if negotiations with foreign carmakers, including the French carmaker Peugeot, fail to get the factory working again.

Workers in Kragujevac and elsewhere have largely stayed clear of the months-long political turmoil in Serbia, but could now increasingly stage their own protests.

Teachers from 1,800 of 2,100 elementary and high schools in Serbia have been on strike for more than two weeks to demand back pay and an increase in their \$150 average monthly salaries. Transportation workers also are demanding money owed them for the past several months, as well as better working conditions.

The teachers are angered by a deal Serbian Premier Mirko

Marjanovic struck with the state-controlled teachers' union to raise their wages by 10 percent. The teachers, who originally demanded a 60 percent raise, said they were not properly represented during the negotiations.

"No one has a right to sign any kind of agreement on our behalf," said Jago Bulatovic, a negotiator for the teachers. He said teachers would continue their protest today.

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How low can we go?

Israelis are used to politics being a contact sport, but the efforts of former internal minister Moshe Shahal to besmirch former police inspector-general Ya'acov Termer, sink to a new low. Such mudslinging by public officials, in turn, presents the media with the dilemma of how to report allegations which may be defamatory, but are made by people so senior that they are difficult to ignore.

This weekend a story appeared in *Ma'ariv* by a former reporter for *Yedioth Aharonot*, who claimed that his former newspaper suppressed a number of his stories on public officials for unprofessional reasons. One of the quashed stories described was about an "extremely senior police officer" who allegedly courted a teenage girl working at an ice-cream parlor he frequented over a period of months. On Sunday, Shahal told Haifa Radio that Termer was the police officer referred to in the *Ma'ariv* story.

Shahal also said that he told then-prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and then-foreign minister Shimon Peres about the story, but decided not to inform the attorney-general. According to Shahal, the three of them agreed to do nothing unless the story was published, at which point the case would be referred to the authorities. Shahal now says he regrets not referring the matter to the attorney-general at the time.

The girl in question has since called the allegations against Termer "libelous" and admitted to exaggerating Termer's interest in her to tease her boyfriend. Termer himself says that he was never alone with the girl, and that when he took her on a tour of the Air Force Museum he first asked her mother's permission.

Yedioth, for its part, explained that it had decided not to run the story because it could not be sufficiently verified, and not for fear it would jeopardize its police sources, as *Ma'ariv* alleged. The girl's subsequent backing of Termer's version of the story vindicates its news judgment, said *Yedioth*, and demonstrates what it called "the difference between a fair press and a yellow press."

Given the overlapping vendettas — between Shahal and Termer and between *Ma'ariv* and *Yedioth*, it may be difficult to ever discover the truth. But it's clear that the person who emerges looking the worst from the whole episode

Moshe Shahal.

Asked why he chose to reveal that it was Termer who was the subject of the *Ma'ariv* allegations, Shahal told Haifa Radio, "I kept the secret for three-and-a-half years. When I was asked who the officer was, I had to answer directly, otherwise all senior police officers would be suspected of eating ice cream all the time." This response gets high marks for snide creativity, but it is no excuse for besmirching the name of a senior police official. If Shahal thought the allegations were true, he should have urged the opening of an investigation at that time. For Shahal to level an accusation now, following an incidental mention of the case in an article published essentially to further the rivalry between two tabloids, is the height of irresponsibility.

It was also irresponsible for *Ma'ariv* to publish a story that alleges scandalous activity by a number of public figures in an off-hand manner. While Termer was not named, the *Ma'ariv* story did name a number of other public figures, but reported the allegations against them in a most cursory fashion.

If the allegations are as solidly based as *Ma'ariv* implies, they should be reported on individually, in a thorough and systematic fashion. If not, they should not be reported at all. The reputations of public figures should not be treated as playthings in a battle between rival newspapers.

There remains the question of the nature of Termer's relationship with the teenager. Given the girl's unreserved defense of Termer, there is no reason to doubt, at this point, that he was only being friendly, and that the entire relationship was an innocent one. Maybe it is naive to believe that any relationship between a young girl and an older man can be innocent. But that possibility cannot be excluded, and we are obligated to relate to anyone accused of misconduct as innocent until proven guilty.

If Shahal's irresponsible accusation backfires on him, perhaps politicians will learn that even in politics there is limit to how low one can stoop when attacking a rival. The press, for its part, may not be able to ignore high-profile accusers, but it can do its best to discredit false accusations by seeking and revealing the truth.



A grotesque portrait

The headline-making "conversion for cash" scandal has spawned a long list of casualties.

If the allegations are true, numerous would-be converts to Judaism had their conversions accelerated and simplified in return for bribes of several thousand dollars each handed over to influential rabbis.

First, the converts themselves were cheated out of due process, and risk having their conversions recalled. Then the public was duped into accepting into the fold those who had failed to meet the "eligibility requirements" of a 3,000-year-old tradition.

Thirdly, a seething populace has tarred honest and ethical rabbis with the same wide brush of corruption. But the biggest victim of the whole sordid mess has been Judaism itself. For it becomes incredibly difficult to separate the perpetrators of the crime from the religion they claim to represent.

The black mark they have inflicted covers not only their own faces, but the face of our entire heritage. Who will blame the overall community if it now faults the Torah, and Jewish Law as it is normatively practiced, for having allowed this travesty to go on for so long? It just seems like another conclusive piece of evidence for those who have held all along that Judaism is outdated, immoral and hypocritical-ridden.

Term in the Jewish lexicon — *hilul hashem* — perfectly describes this facade. Desecration of God's name is what happens when those who purport to be Judaism's standard-bearers behave in a way that brings shame and ridicule on the image and reputation of the Almighty.

STEWART WEISS

When people can point their finger at Jewish practice and declare, "This is the kind of dishonesty and lack of integrity the Torah embodies," then we have violated one of the most sacred of Jewish responsibilities.

If Jews in general are judged by a double standard, observant Jews are subjected to an — equally valid — double standard vis-a-vis the

The biggest victim of the 'conversion for cash' scandal is Judaism itself

nonobservant Jewish community. Every action, every word, every nuance of behavior an Orthodox Jew exhibits is placed under the microscope. We are expected to be more moral, more ethical, more decent than the average.

And that is the way it should be, for we wear — or claim to wear — the mantle of Torah; and that cloak mandates the sort of behavior that is entirely above suspicion and beyond condemnation.

The conversion scandal isn't the only thing to appear lately in our ethical armor. More and more, I'm seeing secular friends vent their anger over comments by certain religious figures to the effect that victims of the helicopter tragedy experienced "Divine retribution" for supposed sins.

Can any response be more odious, more anti-Jewish, more of a profanation?

Is there any figure in the religious world today prepared to stand up and claim that he is a prophet so blessed with Divine guidance that he can explain with arrogant certainty why one person should die and another be saved? When individuals presume to assume God's role, when they assign blame here and culpability there, in places and for reasons only they deem valid, they poison the Jewish well giving forth the pure water of Torah.

Those of us engaged in a daily struggle to show the beauty and wisdom of the observant way of life to the uninitiated have been set back a thousandfold by the irresponsible and ill-informed words and actions of a few deviants who paint a grotesque portrait of Judaism.

It's sad and painful that one should need to spell it out. But this is what traditional Judaism is. It is a normal, compassionate, caring way of life, one that espouses clean hands, open hearts, and humility. It abhors corruption and bribery, and grants the benefit of the doubt to all its followers.

Most of all, it cherishes the sanctity of every Jew, whatever his or her level of religious observance. It is time for the religious establishment, from the chief rabbis on down, to come out with a strong, clear and unequivocal response, serving notice to those who call themselves religious but act otherwise that profaning God's name under the cloak of observant Judaism will no longer be tolerated.

The writer directs the Midreshet Torah V'Emanah Women's Seminary in Jerusalem and the Jewish Outreach Center in Ramatana.

Speak up

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF

There's nothing wrong with opposing the idea of a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon on military grounds or on political ones.

But it is quite unacceptable to claim that the issue must not even be raised because any debate only serves to demoralize our soldiers serving in southern Lebanon.

It's a strange line of argument — almost like saying that if we believe too many of our soldiers are dying because the strategies of yesterday may no longer constitute today's optimal policies, we ought to just shut up and let more soldiers die.

I am reminded of an argument I had with someone about a year after the Six Day War. She said Israel should never withdraw from the territories occupied in June 1967 because withdrawing would imply that the over 700 Israelis killed in the war had died in vain.

I believed that line of argument to be perverted then; I believe it now.

Those who died, died. Whether they died for a worthwhile cause or in vain, only history will tell.

I firmly believe that if the succession of wars Israel has successfully fought against its neighbors finally convinces those neighbors that Israel is indestructible and here to stay — and that they had better accommodate themselves to the reality — all those killed in these wars will not have died in vain.

At the same time, it should seem obvious that if people were killed doing something that seemed right at a given moment, that doesn't mean more people ought to be allowed to get killed at a different moment, just because our leaders are locked

The attempt to stifle the debate on southern Lebanon is misguided

into a concept that may no longer be valid.

Internal Security Minister Kahalani isn't some left-wing intellectual sitting speering hot air on Tel Aviv's Sheinkin Street. He is a reserve brigadier-general with a lot of active military experience — and if he says that Israel's soldiers in Lebanon are "sitting ducks," he isn't being guided by defeatism, but by the notion that our northern border can be defended without so many soldiers losing their lives.

Kahalani's solution for getting out of that of the Kachav Yair circle, might not be practicable at the moment. But if he or they believe our boys are getting killed unnecessarily, they have the obligation to say so.

AS FOR unilateral withdrawal, one doesn't have to be an expert analyst to understand that the only way to resolve the southern Lebanon problem bilaterally today is via an agreement with Syria — and the price for an agreement with Syria is total withdrawal from the Golan.

Though Benjamin Netanyahu has surprised us lefties a few times since becoming prime minister, logic suggests that his metamorphosis is unlikely to continue. Netanyahu could shake Yasser Arafat's hand, sign the Hebron agreement, and release Palestinian women terrorists with blood on their hands, and still argue that he was merely fulfilling the undertakings of the previous government.

Even though Yitzhak Rabin reportedly agreed to withdraw from the Golan in return for full peace, there was no written agreement saying so; he didn't even shake hands on it.

Thus any Netanyahu agreement to withdraw from the Golan would be his own independent decision. And it is difficult to imagine his making such a decision without shedding his political skin altogether.

Also, the Syrians won't let the Lebanese government reach a separate agreement with Israel on southern Lebanon.

The upshot is that the only way to get Israel out of Lebanon in the foreseeable future is by unilateral withdrawal. If that proves impossible, Israel will remain stuck in its "Vietnam" for quite a few more years to come.

So we may be currently stuck. But even if we are, the attempt to stifle the public debate is wrong.

US Ambassador Martin Indyk may have had reasons of his own for joining those who are critical of the debate; but in making his views on the subject public, he was way out of line.

The writer is a political scientist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE SOURCE OF BUREAUCRACY

Sir, — I refer to the article "Sick and tired" by Ann Hutchings which appeared on February 4. I think Ms. Hutchings should indeed return to the US, but try and return not as an American citizen. She should enter as many others who have the same sentiments she has, only about the US, not Israel. Has she ever gone through the bureaucracy in her own country? I suspect not. My family and I (all English-born) were in the US for two years with family there. We also were not allowed to work. We made the mistake of going for a two-hour trip over the border to Mexico for a sightseeing tour. We too were made to feel like criminals, only instead of Hamas, we were treated like war criminals from Mexico. We had to spend the whole of the next two days sitting around our local Immigration Office in Houston just in order to apologize for our short trip and consequent re-entry.

Yes, I definitely agree with Ms. Hutchings. Bureaucracy is a pain, but before she puts the blame so squarely onto the shoulders of Israel, which is a habit common to the rest of the world, she should first look at home. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones!

CANDYCE BLISS

Even Yehuda.

LOCAL RADIO

Sir, — Helen Kaye reports (*Arts and Entertainment*, February 3) that Israel is about to get its first English-language magazine show and its first show in English on the local regional radio airwaves.

For the record, the first such show was Radio Jerusalem's *Sheila's Show*, which broadcast on a daily basis from the fall of 1995 to the middle of 1996. The program, produced and hosted by Sheila Zucker, an English speaker, gave the opportunity to hear the movers and shakers of Israel in the listener's native tongue. Sheila's pleasant voice and congenial personality were very familiar to those of us who had previously lived in the metropolitan New York area. For many years she appeared regularly on WEVD programs of Jewish interest and heard her again in Israel was a refreshing memory of the "old home" we all left behind.

NA'AMA KARASIK

Ginot Shomron.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT

Sir, — It is not clear to the public at large whether in refusing to undergo a polygraph test, Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein is acting contrary to the law or to standard security recruitment procedure for senior officials. However, it is perfectly clear that, based on Rubinstein's previous government service and especially his role as secretary to the cabinet, he must have been well aware of such law or procedure prior to accepting nomination to the position of attorney-general.

Former Chief Justice Meir Shamgar was quoted in an article in the *Post* some time ago as saying, "...the law is the law, you can't pick and choose." If we assume Rubinstein subscribes to this dictum, it seems to me that it would have been more honorable of him to have declined the nomination when approached, on the grounds that he did not intend to take a lie-detector test and thus would not wish to be seen to be "bending" the law to his own convenience.

MALCOLM CAPLAN

Jerusalem.

INCONCEIVABLE

Sir, — MK Michael Kleiner presented a cogent and meaningful bill about the future of the leadership of our nation, and, predictably, the fuzzy thinking and knee-jerk thinking took over. Israel is a Jewish nation, founded on a special basis. All other democracies have placed certain restrictions on who may hold the highest office in their land. Why must we insist on denying ourselves the basic rights held by other sovereign nations? why did we so vehemently fight the "Zionism is racism" resolution at the UN if we only meant to deny ourselves the rights of a Zionist nation a few years later? A non-Jew can hold almost any high office in our country, unlike what happens in many of our neighboring countries where a Jew cannot even be considered a citizen.

It is inconceivable that a non-Jew should ever stand for the office of prime minister of the only country in the world founded as a Jewish nation.

STUART GOLDSTEIN

Ramat Yishai.

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Sir, — One of the highlights of my week is to buy the Friday *Jerusalem Post* and read Rabbi Shlomo Riskin's *Shabbat Shalom* column. I have always found the column to be insightful, informative and thought-provoking. I found his column "Convinced — not coerced" (January 31) particularly so.

Given the situation today where the religious parties influence the coalition government, I have much to fear if these same parties were ever in a position to lead a coalition government.

Today, where are the rights of religious Jews who choose to practice Judaism in a non-Orthodox manner? Today, where are the rights of Masorti (Conservative) rabbis to be recognized as full partners in Judaism and have their halachic conversions recognized by the state? Today, where are the rights of women to pray at the Wall without fear of verbal abuse and physical violence? Where are the rights of these religious minorities in our democratic society today?

SUSAN RAND-LAKRITZ

Kfar Vradim.

ALIKE

Sir, — Having just returned to Ireland from my first visit to the Holy Land, I had to write to say how much I love Israel and its wonderful people, and to thank all who were so kind to me, a stranger, in their land.

Israel and Ireland are alike in many ways; both are small countries, heavily reliant on tourism, with great pride in their culture and heritage, yet a sorrow because they do not have peace.

DR. M.A. TIERNEY

Naas, Eire.

TERRIFIC COLUMN

Sir, — I am a subscriber to *The Jerusalem Post* and look forward each week to the Thursday edition so that I can read the terrific column by Uri Dan and Dennis Eisenberg.

I have been a citizen of Israel for four years — formerly from the US. I appreciate your "telling it the way it is" — the truth.

(MRS.) TEME GOLDMAN

Jerusalem.

MICHAEL BOYDEN

enrol their child in a religious kindergarten, and undertake to send him to a religious school when he is older, the Orthodox rabbinical courts will convert him and he will be registered as a Jew in Israel's population register.

(The implications are significant, because the child's religion will subsequently appear in his identity card, which he will carry throughout his entire life.)

If Yaron and Anna don't submit

Judaism teaches us to 'extend a hand to the convert.' But it can be more like a fist in the face

to these coercive demands, their child will never enjoy full rights in Israel.

IT IS hardly surprising, therefore, that in light of the excessive requirements of the religious establishment, a number of unscrupulous Orthodox rabbis have taken advantage of the monopoly they enjoy by offering "quickie" conversions for financial reward.

It should be added that the conditions set by the Orthodox rabbinical courts are not those of Jewish Law; on the contrary, Halacha states categorically that the conversion of a minor is considered to be to his advantage (*lechuto*) and that it should be conducted by the rabbinical court on his behalf, since he is not of an age to make the decision.

If Yaron and Anna convert their adopted child before bringing him into Israel, he will be considered Jewish under the Law of Return. So the couple will appear before a Reform rabbinical court in

London and have their child undergo circumcision and ritual immersion there.

But it is only a partial solution, because our Orthodox rabbinate, which holds a monopoly on marriage registration in Israel, will not recognize him as fully "kosher." Like tens of thousands of other Israelis, he will never be able to marry in Israel unless he lives a fully Orthodox Jewish life.

This is a condition no liberal society has the right to impose upon its citizens. It's like telling them: "You are good enough to pay taxes, good enough to risk your lives in defending the country — but you have no right to marry here."

It is absurd that civil marriage through the agency of a non-Jewish official in Cyprus or Paraguay should have become the only option available to so many Israeli citizens. It's the price we pay for Orthodox control over religion resulting from coalition politics.

The present situation is not only a personal tragedy for Yaron and Anna. It is a disgrace for a democratic state, and an affront to a Judaism that teaches us to "extend a hand to the convert."

Present legislative attempts to extend the power of Orthodoxy in the field of conversion represent a further attack on civil liberties, seeking to deny the reality of a pluralistic Jewish society in which no one should have the right to claim a monopoly on Judaism.

Finally, Yaron and Anna are pseudonyms. In an Orwellian Jewish world in which rabbinical courts maintain computer files on those forbidden to marry, and in which converts appear disguised on TV for fear of having their conversions rescinded, their real names had to be concealed.

The writer is convenor of the Rabbinical Court of the Israel Council of Progressive Rabbis.

قانون الاسماء

The Jerusalem Post Tuesday, February 18, 1997

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

IN TUNE

'Israel's conscience' delivers

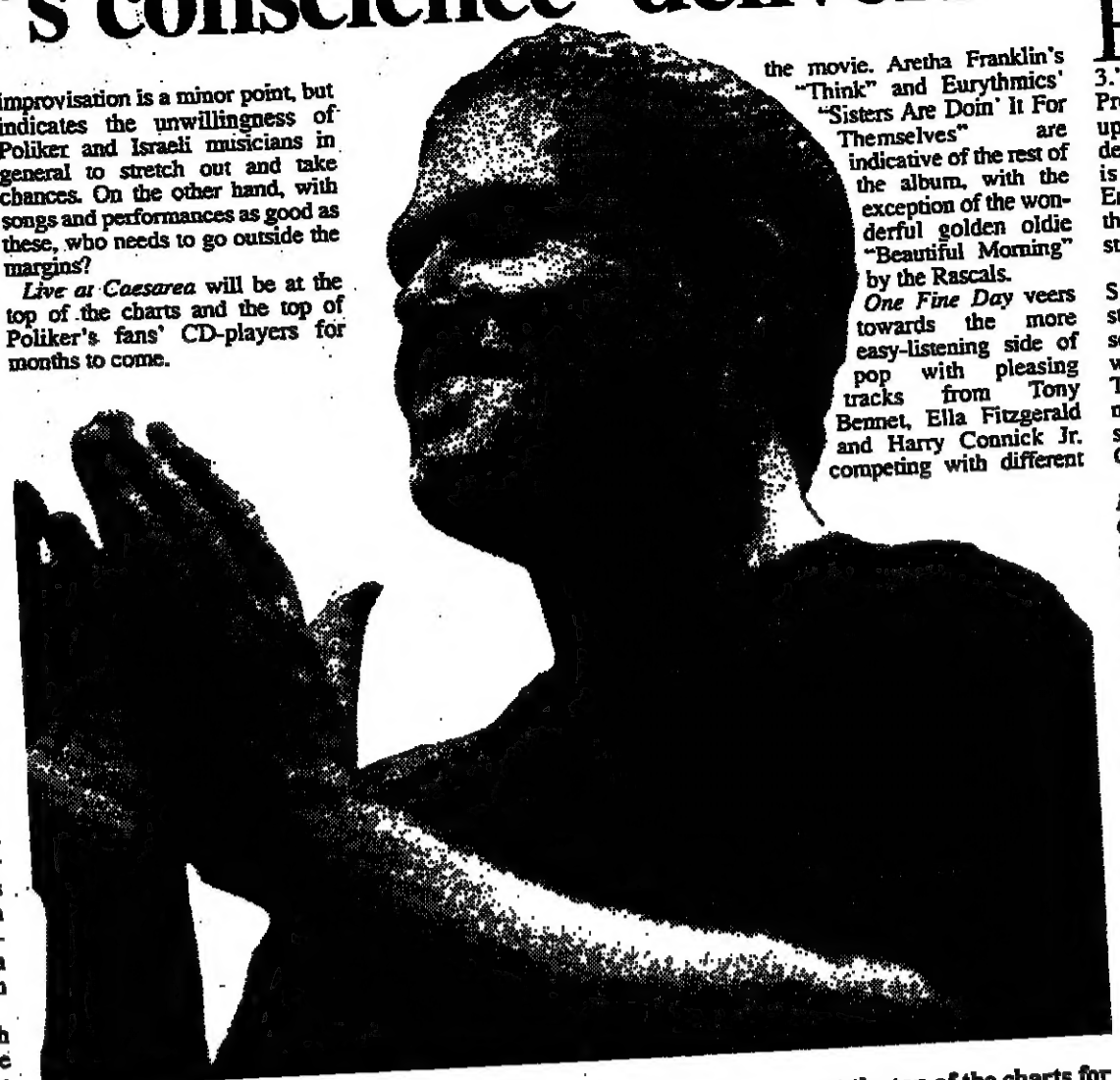
By DAVID BRINN

Yehuda Poliker's first live album is everything that one could hope for. The 45-year-old local icon serves up a satisfying 31-song overview of his impressive career covering his days in Ben-Zion, his forays into Greek music and his deeply personal reflective rock, which has earned him the title "the conscience of Israel."

Backed by an impeccably tasteful band including Mashina alumi Michael Benson on bass and Avner

improvisation is a minor point, but indicates the unwillingness of Poliker and Israeli musicians in general to stretch out and take chances. On the other hand, with songs and performances as good as these, who needs to go outside the margins?

Live at Caesarea will be at the top of the charts and the top of Poliker's fans' CD-players for months to come.



the movie. Aretha Franklin's "Think" and Eurythmics' "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves" are indicative of the rest of the album, with the exception of the wonderful golden oldie "Beautiful Morning" by the Rascals.

One Fine Day veers towards the more easy-listening side of pop with pleasing tracks from Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald and Harry Connick Jr. competing with different

- LIVE AT CAESAREA
Yehuda Poliker
(NMC)
- THE FIRST WIVES CLUB
SOUNDTRACK
Various Artists
(NMC)
- ONE FINE DAY
SOUNDTRACK
Various Artists
(NMC)

Hodrov on accordion, who adapt themselves from piano-based ballads to full-tilt rockers. Poliker keeps silent between songs and lets his music do the talking. One can feel and hear the audience's complete connection to Poliker in a way that few other performers can achieve.

All the hits are there, and with the abundance of recognizable songs, at times it appears that the radio has been left on a particularly good station. To pick a few, "The Child in You," "Less But Hurts," "Face to Face" and "What Will Be Will Be" are all given sensitive, heartfelt treatments. Poliker's husky voice is in fine form and lends a sense of urgency to the material.

If there is one complaint, it's the precision with which the songs are played, almost note for note to the recorded versions. This lack of

Poliker has topped himself with 'Live at Caesarea,' which is sure to be at the top of the charts for months to come.

A RECENT *New York Times* article reported that soundtracks have made a huge comeback lately and are, along with rap, one of the few big moneymakers left on the pop music scene. Consumers want to know what they are buying, and what better way than to hear the whole album than at the movie the-

ater first?

Both *The First Wives Club* and *One Fine Day* display the comfortable marriage of pop and movies and present a pleasant gamut of classic pop aimed at aging baby boomers. *Wives* aims at the female half with most songs stressing the "women against men" theme of

versions of the films' title songs by originals The Chiffons and former 10,000 Maniac Natalie Merchant. If you are looking for souvenirs from these movies, then look no further.

THEATER REVIEW

Princely production of Renaissance fun

By NAOMI DOUDAI

The Shabbat text is bound to the Machiavelli original in moral tenor if not political style.

Born about 500 years ago, Machiavelli is the first great name in the history of Renaissance theater. In his drama, he crystallized with brutal irony - but without scorn - the mores and morals that were inseparable from success.

LA MANDRAGOLA (THE MANDRAKE)
By Niccolò Machiavelli
Habimah National Theater

The mercenary manipulations, double-dealing, and general lack of scruples - social or sexual - rampant then, correspond to the marketplace morals of our own day. This alone makes *The*

Mandrake more than mere entertainment.

Perhaps to that end, Habimah has profitably devoted an intensive and highly professional training course in stage skills to this cadre of freshly graduated actors. Their highly honed performances as masked mimes, acrobats, vocalists, tumblers in this galaxy of commedia dell'arte stereotypes are almost flawless, their frolics endlessly fresh and exuberantly funny.

In an explosion of revelry and raw, ribald sex, Ilan Ronen's direction reaches out to a mutually roisterous, roaring audience in a tightly controlled, perfectly timed demonstration of audience-actor participation.

Ori Widislavsky's singular percussion music, performed by Boris Sichen, Yehudit Greenspan's exquisite masks, Mikl Ben-C'naan's design and Nitan Panurim's festive lighting all make for a visually delightful, unforgettable evening of fun.

CONCERT REVIEW

Youthful freshness at the piano

By URY EPPSTEIN

The Jerusalem Trio (Yaron Rosenthal, Roy Shiloah, Ariel Tushinsky), in the Youth at the Center series, displayed a delightful blending of youthful freshness with remarkably mature expression and shaping.

'YOUTH AT THE CENTER' SERIES
Piano trios by Haydn, Brahms, Ravel, Jerusalem Trio

A variety of styles was provided in the piano trios by Haydn, Brahms and Ravel, rendered right in the spirit of these composers, highly different from each other though they are.

Haydn's characteristic sparkle and significant accentuations were highlighted in his Trio Hob.XV/9.

There was refined delicacy in Ravel's opening movement, refreshing liveliness in the second one, and an appropriate meditative mood in the third.

The exuberance and drive in Brahms's Trio Op. 8 were thoroughly enjoyable.

So was the Mendelssohnian sprightliness of his Scherzo, and the songfulness of its slow movement.

With its noticeable esprit de corps and musical sensitivity, this group has what it takes for developing, hopefully, into one of the country's outstanding piano trios.

Jerusalem Music Center, Mishkenot Sha'ananim, February 7.

Channel 3's new names

By HELEN KAYE

Billboards all over the country are blaring "look what you're getting on Channel 3." The ICP (Israel Cable Programs) cable channel, which up until now has been known demurely as the Family Channel, is gunning for the title Entertainment Channel Plus with the new prime time line-up that starts March 2.

Top of the list is Aaron Spelling's \$1 million-per-episode steamy, rich 'n' rotten society soap called *Sunset Beach* which will run Sunday through Thursday at 8 p.m. - as "an alternative to watching the news," says ICP general manager Yossi Ozrad.

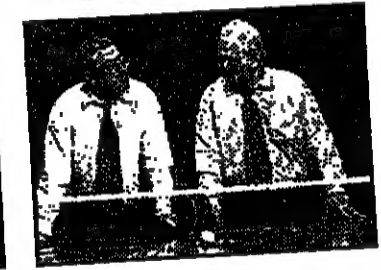
Fans of *Friends*, *Seinfeld*, *ER*, *Married with Children*, *Single Guy* and *Ned & Stacey* can relax, and there's also a new sitcom starring Brooke Shields as *Suddenly Susan* set in San Francisco which will be here on Tuesdays at 9:40 p.m. right after *Seinfeld*.

Channel 3 blends these high-rating imports with "10 new locally produced programs, more than the [Channel 2] franchises," boasts Ozrad. "We plan to spend NIS 150 million on original programming over the next three years, including around NIS 3.5 million on nine feature films."

The Hebrew-language programs range from game shows to dramas to current affairs and, except for the latter, are mostly clones of their US counterparts like *Mister Running*, a taxi-driver drama with Amos Lavi going into its second season, and the new beach action series called *Deep Blue* which has gals (curvy) and guys (hunky) fighting crime in and out of the water. The exception is a return season of *Jaffa Pictures* based on Menahem Talmi's stories of Jaffa in the '50s.

Also new are current affairs at 5:30 p.m. with Guy Pines Sunday through Wednesday, and on Thursday that slot will be filled by those professional *enraptured* terrible Amnon Dankner and Tommy Lapid, turning up the heat under the cauldron with a guest inside. Of the 470 hours of Hebrew-language programming the law requires from the cable channels in 1997, "we have around 300-350," says Ozrad proudly.

ICP also controls Channel 4, the movie channel, and promises to unveil "an exciting new season" in April.



Clockwise from top: The cast of 'Sunset Beach,' the latest Aaron Spelling soap to reach us; Brooke Shields, star of 'Suddenly Susan'; Amnon Dankner and Tommy Lapid; Amos Lavi in 'Mister Running'; the curvy cast of 'Deep Blue.'

DANCE REVIEW

Capturing the essence of a soul

By ORA BRAFMAN

Batsheva presented four works to commemorate 10 years of Ohad Naharin's ties with Jiri Kylian and his dance company, NDT. What a treat it was.

The highlight of the evening was *No Sleep Till Dawn of Day*, a duet Kylian created in 1992 for two of his favorite dancers, Sabine Kupferberg and Martine Van Hamel of NDT 3 (a company composed of dancers aged over 40). Here it was danced by Adi Salant and Isabel Chaffoud of Batsheva who are half the age of the original cast, but they did justice to the work that treats maturity as an asset.

The piece is set to a hypnotizing chant, "Nyuba Numli," a lullaby

MOSTLY KYLIAN
Batsheva Company and Batsheva Ensemble

SIX DANCES
By Jiri Kylian

NO SLEEP TILL DAWN OF DAY
By Jiri Kylian (Premier), *Passamezzo* - by Ohad Naharin, *Arbes* - by Ohad Naharin, February 14, at Suzanne Dellal, Tel Aviv.

from the Solomon Islands. On that enigmatic foundation Kylian choreographed a gem, a dance that captured the essence of a soul.

Like a master artist who creates an exquisite drawing using the simplest of means, so did Kylian in this slow, unpretentious, territorially-confined duet. Yet he managed to

penetrate through all our defenses right to the gut. It is profound work, sharp and sad yet beautiful, and as such, it tears out your heart.

Some call Kylian conservative, probably because he transmits great respect to music and less so to conceptual trends. His work transcends fleeting fashions. When he is at his best, he reassures the primal instinct which contains the reason for it all - that foremost form of non-verbal communication we call dance.

The rest of the program included repeats from previous seasons, mostly his. The young Batsheva Ensemble, successfully presented Kylian's *Six Dances* (accompanied by music from Mozart). The young dancers were less impressive in performing the duet *Passamezzo*.

CLASSIC DISCS

Piazzollamania strikes again

By MICHAEL AIZENSTADT

There seems to be Piazzollamania all over the music world today. Daniel Barenboim plays Piazzolla on his latest album which focuses on tango music from his native Argentina.

And now Gideon Kremer plays Piazzolla too.

There are even some Piazzolla discs around on which the legendary composer himself plays on the bandoneon, the Argentinian accordion with a

But in each and every one there is that explosive tension between two human beings, between a man and a woman who love each other and at the same time yearn for much more than mere entertainment and excitement.

Two new Piazzolla discs, both gripping and engaging, reflect the new Piazzolla craze of our days.

Pablo Mainetti captures the ingenuity of the composer as he plays the bandoneon solo in Piazzolla's concerto for that instrument.

It is a powerful reading of a score that has all the Piazzolla trademarks in it.

And the rest of the disc is as compelling with Mainetti emerging as a towering musician who understands the very essence of the music he plays and the composer who wrote it.

This is one of the best Piazzolla discs around in which the composer himself, who died five years ago, is not involved.

The other disc is somewhat different in nature. On the one hand it is Piazzolla music performed by first-rate musicians including bandoneon wizard Per Arne Glorvigen.

But the 11 numbers are arrangements from Piazzolla originals for musicians who are first and foremost anchored in the classical tradition.

Kremer emerges as a first-rate folk violinist on this disc. He never lets you guess that he is a



Gideon Kremer emerges as a first-rate folk violinist on the Piazzolla disc.

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA: TANGO, CONCERTO FOR BANDONEON.

Pablo Mainetti, Orquesta de Camara Teatro Libre, Josep Pons, Harmonia Mundi France (901595). Homage to Piazzolla. Gideon Kremer, Nonesuch (7539-79407-2).

sultry, scorching and at the same time soothing sound.

Piazzolla is a master composer who really understands the down-to-earth nature of the tango. His are not beautified tangos, his are not lighthearted dance numbers.

Piazzolla writes from the bottom of the heart and depicts the daily hardships of his native land.

His tangos are sultry and dirty when needed, they are aching and painful. His tangos are sexy and they can also be loving and warm.

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15

THIS LAST WEEKS ON WEEK CHARTS			ARTIST	TITLE
#1	NEW	1	YEHUDA POLIKER	LIVE
#2	13	48	SHLOMO ARTZI	TWO
#3	NEW	1	NONA	NONA
#4	1	14	OST	EVITA
#5	1	13	VIA	SPIRIT OF THE WORLD
#6	1	47	RITA	COLLECTION
#7	5	11	EHUD BANAI	OD MEAT
#8	7	25	RAMI KLEINSTEIN	COLLECTION
#9	8	9	RONIT SHAHAR	SHALOM LATMIMUT
#10	2	13	TONI BRAXTON	SECRETS
#11	NEW	1	PRANA	GEOMANTIC
#12	6	8	VIA	BEST OF '96
#13	13	10	NO DOUBT	TRAGIC KINGDOM
#14	15	41	GEORGE MICHAEL	OLDER
#15	NEW	1	BLUR	BLUR

Tower Records' top-selling albums for last week

book department

Megillat Esther

The story of Esther comes alive for children with this outstanding Megilla Scroll from Scopus Films.

Contains the complete vowelized Hebrew text and an original English translation. Beautifully illustrated throughout in vivid color with the famous Scopus clay figurines of the entire Purim cast.

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BUSINESS

in brief

Dollar at new high, NIS 3.351

The dollar yesterday rose to a new high of 3.351 against the shekel, an 0.3-percent appreciation with the previous trading day's closing rate. So far this year a robust greenback, reflecting the ongoing rigorous performance of the American economy, has appreciated 3.1% against the shekel. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Meridor, Mexican FM discuss trade

Mexican Foreign Minister Jose Angel Gurría discussed ways of improving economic relations with Israel, including prospects for free trade, in talks yesterday with Finance Minister Dan Meridor. In a separate meeting with Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, the two men discussed ways to combat Mexico's inflation. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Bulgarian fuel crisis looms

Bulgaria's interim government yesterday raised petrol prices by up to 178 percent in a bid to free suppliers' volumes kept in storage. Prime Minister Stefan Sofianski said. "The new prices will be effective from today, and it is high time that the fuel, which suppliers hold back, appeared on the [domestic] market," Sofianski told a news conference. "We hope that the lev/dollar exchange rate will stabilize, despite the price rise. The crisis and the chaos are enormous."

On Friday the new interim government, which inherited crippling fuel and grain shortages, banned fuel exports until April 30 and troops enforced border controls in a bid to curb oil smuggling by companies and private motorists. A liter of petrol cost 10 cents on Friday based on a rate of 660 leva per dollar. The lev traded around 3,000 per dollar on Friday. *Reuters*

Dutch ban pig market

The Dutch Ministry for Agricultural Affairs said yesterday it had banned concentrating pigs in any one place throughout the whole country from today. "This implies that pigs from various companies are no longer allowed to be taken to export centers. All pig markets have been suspended," the ministry said in a statement. It added that the measure was necessary to reduce the risk of spreading the swine fever epidemic currently hitting the southern Netherlands. All transport bans which were imposed earlier remained valid.

Earlier yesterday, the Belgian authorities decided to slaughter 12,000 pigs to prevent the contagious disease from spreading to Belgium from the Netherlands. So far, 17 cases of swine fever have been discovered in the Netherlands. The Dutch farm ministry has ordered the slaughter of over 35,000 pigs in the areas which are affected. *Reuters*

VW seeks accelerated bribery probe

Volkswagen AG said yesterday it had asked German prosecutors to investigate growing bribery allegations tied to a major paint factory contract for its Czech Skoda unit awarded to Swiss-Swedish engineering group ABB Asea Brown Boveri. VW said it filed the legal complaint on Friday to start the criminal probe into allegations that some VW workers demanded DM 20 million in bribes from ABB in exchange for the DM 400m. plant expansion contract.

The request to prosecutors in Braunschweig came as *Der Spiegel* said a group of workers at VW and General Motors Corp for years have sought and received hundreds of millions of marks in bribes from several parts suppliers. *Reuters*

Electric Corp. seeking to raise \$1b. in 20% IPO

PM's Office: Electric Corp. has not yet asked our approval

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

State-owned Israel Electric Corporation (IEC) wants to offer 20 percent of its shares on local and overseas stock exchanges to partially finance its ambitious development plans, board chairman Gad Ya'acobi said yesterday.

Assuming the share issue goes ahead, it will mark the first stage of the government's privatization of the monopoly.

However, the announcement caught by surprise officials in the Prime Minister's Office, who in the past have said the government's short-term privatization plans are expected to focus on less problematic companies.

Moshe Leon, the deputy director-general in the Prime Minister's Office who is the privatization czar, said IEC's management has not yet informed the government of its plans, although the sale is subject to the government's approval.

IEC has long been considered a major obstacle on the way to demonopolization and privatization, due to its powerful union's ability to bring the economy to a standstill by staging a comprehensive strike.

"I don't think the public will have any objections to the government's sale of such difficult companies," said Leon. IEC, which has some 13,000 employees and an annual turnover of more than \$2 billion, expects to raise \$1b. from the share issue, which is scheduled for the end of the year or the start of 1998, a company spokesman said.

Ya'acobi stressed that the IPO would by no means be intended to deprive the government of its controlling share in the company. Some of the shares will be offered to IEC's workers, as is customary worldwide.

Explaining that the share issue will require the government's approval, Ya'acobi said the company's plan is only in its preliminary stage.

"We have not yet invited companies to appraise the company's worth, but we know the company's total assets are valued at close to \$10b.," Ya'acobi said. IEC's development plans are based on estimates that the country's demand for electricity increases at a rate of 3% a year, said Rafi Peled, president and CEO of the company.

He said long-term development plans are necessary to avoid a situation whereby there will be a shortage in electricity.

In the meantime, IEC management and workers are proceeding with their ongoing struggle against a proposed legal amendment which would shorten to six years the company's current 10-year franchise as the country's effectively sole power provider.

The Knesset is expected to discuss the proposal later this week. "The decision might make the company dependent on government budgets and require a renewal of loan guarantees," Ya'acobi said on Israel Radio.

According to Ya'acobi, developing Israel's electric power sector requires raising about \$4b. a year over the next 10 years.

Swiss back call for forum on Holocaust gold

ZURICH (Reuters) - British politicians seeking compensation for Holocaust survivors said yesterday they had won Switzerland's backing for a proposed conference of all countries that handled Nazi gold during World War II.

Two British members of parliament and a British deputy to the European Parliament said they would push Prime Minister John Major's government to organize such a conference after securing support in talks with Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti.

Labor MP Greville Janner, who is a vice-president of the World Jewish Congress and a critic of Swiss wartime gold purchases from Hitler's Germany, said Swiss backing was crucial for an international conference to be called.

"It could not work without the full cooperation of the Swiss, and we were delighted that Flavio Cotti said he thought it was an excellent idea and that he thought the Swiss would participate," he said from Bern after meeting Cotti.

"We are now going to take this back to the British government and suggest that they get it moving," said Janner, who met Cotti with Conservative member of parliament David Hunt and Labor European Parliament deputy Glyn Ford.

Swiss officials confirmed that Cotti had welcomed the idea. Switzerland played a leading role among wartime neutral states in buying Nazi German gold, much of it stolen from occupied countries. But other neutral countries, such as Sweden and Portugal, also accepted gold from Hitler's central bank.

Janner said the proposal was for all countries that bought or handled Nazi gold to pool their knowledge on exactly how much was looted by Nazi Germany from occupied countries or from Holocaust victims and where that treasure ultimately went.

"There are two objects. The first is to find the truth for its own sake," Janner said. "The second is to consider whether on the basis of the truth funds can be made available, first for the [Holocaust] survivors and their families and second to ensure that there is never a future Holocaust," he added.

Much of the gold was collected after the war by the Western Allies - the US, Britain and France - and some remains in their vaults today, stockpiles that some Jewish groups have demanded be used to help impoverished Holocaust survivors and their families.

British diplomatic sources have said the US, Britain and France agreed not to distribute \$68 million of Nazi gold they still hold until they establish whether it could be given to Holocaust survivors.

The gold is all that remains of 377 tonnes - now worth \$4.1 billion - recovered at the end of World War II by Allied forces. The rest has already been distributed by a Tripartite Gold Commission (TGC) back to ransacked central banks.

Switzerland paid the Allies 250 million Swiss francs under a 1946 agreement to repay about half of its war-end stock of Nazi German gold worth 500 million Swiss francs at the time.

In 1946, the dollar was worth 4.30 Swiss francs.



Russian teachers protest

People dressed as famous Russian writers take part in a protest rally of teachers in Moscow yesterday, demanding unpaid wages. Hundreds of teachers from different regions of Russia took part in the rally. The sign reads: 'Russia without education - a country with no future.' *(Reuters)*

Underwriters: Insistence on including '96 results will delay Discount offer

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

The Securities Authority's insistence on including Bank Discount's 1996 financial statements in its prospectus will postpone the government's public offering of the bank to the second quarter, underwriters taking part in the offering said yesterday.

The government initially intended to float a 17-percent stake in Israel's third largest bank during the first quarter.

The Securities Authority is expected to make a final decision by the end of this week as to whether the public share issue will be able to go ahead before the end of March.

The Securities Authority yesterday rejected a proposal to include the 1996 financial statements of Mercantile Discount Bank and Discount Mortgage Bank in Bank Discount's prospectus, as part of attempts by

the bank and government to stand by their original plan.

The Securities Authority has subjected the approval of the prospectus to the receipt of more accurate information on the volume of additional allowances for doubtful debts in the fourth quarter.

In a meeting with Bank Discount representatives, MI Holdings, and underwriters, the Securities Authority representatives emphasized that the prospectus must include Bank Discount's financial statements for 1996.

The additional allowances for doubtful debts are mainly due to

difficulties encountered in the real estate sector.

Sources close to the share issue predicted the issue, which is in the framework of the government's privatization plan, will be postponed to either this April or May.

Earlier this week Bank Discount submitted the Securities Authority an estimate, calculating the size of doubtful debts at between NIS 40 million and NIS 60m, but the Securities Authority said this was insufficient.

Bank Discount said it will take them several weeks to calculate the exact figure.

The issue is expected to raise NIS 650m., of which NIS 170m. will be immediate.

Bank Discount has been valued for the offering at NIS 3.9 billion.

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Parties other than "Government Corporations" (as defined in the below-mentioned Sale Procedure) interested in purchasing all the State Shares (99.9% of the issued company capital), may apply to the Government of Israel through the Government Companies Authority as specified in this announcement.

A Government Corporation will not be permitted to participate in the sale process on its own or as part of an applicant group (as such terms are defined in the below-mentioned Sale Procedure).

Necessary application forms and documents - written in Hebrew - including the Procedure for Sale of the State Shares (above-mentioned and hereinafter: "the Sale Procedure"), may be purchased as of Tuesday, February 18, 1997, from Mr. Ilan Avrahami or Mr. Natan Treitel, Government Companies Authority, 1 Kaplan St., 7th floor, Room 721, Jerusalem (hereinafter: "the Government Companies Authority Offices"): Tel. 02-5317567, 02-5317448; Fax. 02-5611680, for a sum of NIS 2,500 (which shall not be refunded), payable by a banker's cheque to the Ministry of Finance - the Accountant General.

The final date for submitting applications, according to the conditions set forth in the Sale Procedure, is Tuesday, April 1, 1997, at 17:00 at the Government Companies Authority Offices. The Government Companies Authority may at any time, by way of a published announcement, extend or advance the final date for submission of applications, as well as change other dates and conditions in the Sale Procedure, at its sole and absolute discretion.

The Government shall be entitled, at its sole and absolute discretion, to select from among the applicants and from among other parties it may address, candidates who shall continue to participate in the sale process, after considering which candidates best satisfy the requirements specified in the Sale Procedure, including among others, managerial and business development capabilities, the existence of financial capabilities for the purchase of the State Shares and for the operation of the company and its various business activities and other requirements, specified in the Sale Procedure.

The sale of the State Shares is exempt from the obligation to hold a tender, under the "Obligation of Tenders Regulations - 1993."

In order to remove any doubt, it is hereby clarified that this announcement does not constitute an invitation to the general public to purchase the State Shares, nor does it constitute an offer or undertaking on the part of the Government to sell the State Shares. The purchaser of the State Shares shall be determined in accordance with the Sale Procedure, including negotiations which the Government may, at its sole and absolute discretion, conduct, if it shall decide to proceed with the said sale of the State Shares.

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Patrah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.95)

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.625	1.750	2.125
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.750	1.000
Yen (10 million yen)			

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (17.2.97)

CURRENCY BASKET	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep.
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.8013	3.8594	3.26	3.42	3.8368
German mark	1.9569	1.9708	1.82	2.02	3.3510
Pound sterling	5.3756	5.4624	5.28	5.54	1.9776
French franc	0.5788	0.5892	0.58	0.60	5.4268
Japanese yen (100)	2.6732	2.7133	2.62	2.76	0.5881
Dutch florin	1.7455	1.7717	1.71	1.80	2.8983
Swiss franc	2.2488	2.2821	2.20	2.32	1.7622
Swedish krona	0.4478	0.4551	0.44	0.47	2.2711
Norwegian krone	0.4927	0.5007	0.48	0.51	0.4623
Denish krona	0.5136	0.5218	0.50	0.53	0.4908
Finnish mark	0.6608	0.6718	0.64	0.68	0.5188
Canadian dollar	2.4546	2.4942	2.41	2.53	0.8677
Australian dollar	2.5285	2.5795	2.49	2.62	2.4780
S. African rand	0.7507	0.7629	0.68	0.77	2.5867
Belgian franc (10)	0.3484	0.3587	0.33	0.36	0.7591
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7817	2.8286	2.73	2.87	0.9586
Italian lire (1000)	1.9838	2.0159	1.94	2.07	2.8104
Jordanian dinar	4.8200	4.9300	4.82	4.93	2.0038
Singapore pound	0.9409	1.0200	0.94	1.03	4.7752
EU	3.9057	3.9571	3.84	4.03	1.0556
Irish punt	5.3479	5.3928	5.18	5.41	3.8481
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3141	2.3515	2.27	2.39	5.2983

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Unrest apparently eased in Iranian oil sector

By SHARIF IMAM-JOMEH

TEHRAN (Reuters) — Most oil workers who staged a protest at Iran's Oil Ministry on Sunday have returned to work, while those arrested appeared to have been released, an employee at the National Iranian Oil Company said yesterday.

"The workers told me they were back at their jobs and waiting for officials to issue a formal statement on actions they agreed to be taken on most of their demands," the employee who works at the NIOC offices in Tehran said.

"A worker said police late last night [Sunday] started releasing those arrested and that he believed all had been freed, but he was not sure," he added.

Police in riot gear on Sunday arrested four or five busloads of oil workers from among 1,000 protesters from the NIOC-owned

Tehran refinery demonstrating to press for higher wages and other demands, witnesses said. It was not immediately clear whether the protest had affected work at the refinery, Iran's third largest, with a capacity of 225,000 barrels per day (bpd).

The workers were protesting against the failure of officials to deliver on promises made last month to meet some of their demands for pay rises, food coupons and housing loans.

They were also protesting against pressure put on their leaders to resign from their posts at the refinery's union, said the employee, who was not involved in the protest.

The official Iranian news agency IRNA said on Sunday the workers ended their protest and returned to work after their representatives reached agreement with officials.

The Kar va Kargar (Work and

Worker) newspaper yesterday urged oil officials to accept the workers' demands and allow recognized unions free activity.

"If we do this, then secret organizations will not arise and the [Islamic] revolutionary forces will express their demands in a more reasonable way," the pro-labor daily said.

The newspaper warned workers not to allow themselves to be used by "enemies" and blasted foreign media for blowing the protest out of proportions.

Iranian officials in January denied reports of a strike at the 40,000 bpd Shiraz refinery after France's General Labor Confederation called on Iran to respond favorably to demands made by the employees at Shiraz, as well as at refineries in Tehran, Tabriz and Isfahan.

Iran — the world's third biggest oil exporter — regularly exports fuel oil and middle distillates

from its eight refineries that have a capacity of 1.2 million bpd.

The Tehran refinery was also the site of a two-week long hunger strike by workers demanding wage increases in 1992, the first such action reported since purges in several industries following the 1979 Islamic revolution triggered tensions.

The 1992 protest ended after Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh met workers representatives and promised to look into their demands.

Iranian governments have always been especially sensitive to protests by oil workers, who at crucial times have proved capable of stopping the flow of crude exports — which bring in the bulk of Iran's hard cash.

A strike late in 1978 by Iran's 100,000 oil workers shut down the industry and played a key role in the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979.

TASE ROUNDUP

Indexes set record highs

Mishtanim 265.01 ▲ 1.98% Maof 271.93 ▲ 1.86%

By ROBERT DANIEL

Share indexes rose to records yesterday as investors maintained optimism about lower inflation, the outlook for interest rates, a weaker shekel, and political stability.

The chemicals companies, Israel Land Development Co., building materials company Ytong Industries Ltd., gasoline marketer Delek, Mazav Cable Systems Ltd., Israel General Bank and software house Formula Systems Ltd. were among the winners.

Holding back the market were department-store chain Shekem Ltd., voice-logging-system producer Nice Systems Ltd. and clothing producer and retailer Polgat Industries Ltd.

"There's been a good reaction from the market to the political side and the economic side," said Eli Nahum, co-managing director at Zannex Securities in Ramat Gan.

The Mishtanim index of 100 most-traded shares added 1.98

percent to 265.01, while the Maof index of 25 top issues jumped 1.86% to 271.93.

The Mishtanim and Maof set their previous life highs — 259.95 and 269.01 respectively — on February 5.

Across the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, NIS 216.6 million of shares traded. That's 17% above the month's daily average of NIS 184.6m. and 32% above the year's average of NIS 164m.

Nearly 5 1/2 issues advanced for every one that declined. Movers Israel Chemicals Ltd. was the most active issue, rising 3.75% on NIS 9.4m. of shares traded. Holding company Ctal Israel Ltd. rose 2.25% on NIS 9.3m.

Formula Systems shares were 2% higher at 50.61. Formula said yesterday that it sold warrants convertible to 10% of its stock to the New York securities firm Merrill Lynch & Co. Proceeds to the company were about \$9.25m, for the 740,000 warrants. (Bloomberg)

India seeks curb of foreign TV media

BANGALORE, India (Reuters)

— India, which is debating opening its airwaves to private television and radio stations, needs to place curbs on foreign broadcast media.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Chand Mahabir said yesterday. "There has to be some regulation for the entry of foreign media," he said.

"Unfortunately, everybody is showing things which are against the culture and tradition of the country. We cannot allow everybody to broadcast whatever they want."

Abraham, who also heads the civil aviation ministry, told reporters in this south Indian city the government would consult opposition parties on a broadcast bill that could permit private radio and television stations.

"We will take a decision after consulting all the political parties," he said. The broadcast bill is widely expected to be presented during parliament's budget session, which begins on Thursday.

He said the Indian cabinet was expected to meet later in New Delhi to discuss the bill, which aims to give greater autonomy to state-run media and permission for private broadcasts from Indian soil.

Abraham has also strenuously opposed a proposal to allow foreign airlines into India's aviation industry.

India began ending state monopolies in several key industries under an economic liberalization program launched in 1991.

But the state still controls all rights on broadcasts, called uplinks, in television parlance, from Indian soil.

State-run Doordarshan television and All India Radio rent out time-slots and free commercial time to private broadcasters, but do not permit them to own broadcast stations or air programs freely.

Foreign cable channels beam programming into India off satellites.

The proposed law covers cable broadcasts, uplinking, direct-to-home (DTH) broadcasting by satellite broadcasters, the setting up of an independent regulator to control the airwaves, and licensing in future for private broadcasting.

Officials have said the immediate priority for the government is the setting up of Prasar Bharati, a broadcasting authority that would be funded by the government but work autonomously on the lines of the British Broadcasting Corporation.



French transport drivers strike for 12th day

Striking French transport drivers kick a soccer ball around a bus parking area in Nice, as a 12-day job action continues yesterday. The drivers' strike, in support of a demand for shorter working hours, has disrupted transport in most French cities. (Reuters)

Societe Gen. attacks Credit Lyon. bailout

By PENNY MACRAE

PARIS (Reuters) — French bank Societe Generale, renewing its attack on state aid to Credit Lyonnais, said yesterday it wanted the government to consider breaking up its rival and selling off most of its operations.

Societe Generale head Marc Vienot wrote to European Commissioner Karel Van Miert last month asking him to make the French government review "alternative solutions for the controlled liquidation and sale of blocks" of Credit Lyonnais, a bank spokesman said.

The commission must clear all state aid to the bank, still suffering from a heavy expansion spree in the late 1980s, which backfired and led to massive losses. The government is hoping to privatize the bank as soon as possible.

Le Monde said the British had also expressed concerns to the Commission about French state aid to the bank.

The Societe Generale spokesman said Vienot asked "for the sale of all its [Credit Lyonnais] overseas activities... as well as its domestic operations such as investment management, consumer credit and perhaps a fraction of its retail network. But it's up to the shareholder [the state] to decide," the spokesman said.

The bank has sold many of its South American activities but has been resistant to selling its US, Asian or European operations.

Meanwhile, Le Monde reported the commission believed state aid to the bank to be in violation of the 1993 law on state aid. The government and Credit Lyonnais are negotiating the privatization plan.

The aid would be on top of 45 billion francs in support from the French taxpayer — the bank received in 1995 and 3.9 billion francs in emergency help it got in 1996 to allow it to report a modest profit.

and around Jerusalem.

The parties MKs warned the premier that if he did not accept their demand they would not feel bound to support the coalition in Knesset votes.

The NRP MKs intend boycotting tomorrow's plenum debate on the issue and instead will tour the areas where it wants construction to start. They will be joined on their trip by MKs from the Land of Israel Front, nicknamed "Force 17" by its chairman Michael Kleiner (Geshet).

Before a meeting of the new caucus yesterday, Kleiner told reporters "We will exercise our power against Bibi [Netanyahu]."

He then told the group: "Our presence on Har Homa is more important than our presence in the Knesset. There is pressure on Netanyahu and I hope this pressure will help make him fulfill his policy promises. The main problem is that 'tunnel trauma' which

has grabbed and paralyzed Netanyahu." Herb Keiron adds:

As the controversy raged over whether to carry out already approved construction at Har Homa, Israel Radio reported that an additional 130 dunams of land at the site has been bought by Australian millionaire Joseph Gutnick.

Gutnick could not be reached last night for confirmation. But one source involved in land purchases in east Jerusalem said his group of investors was once offered that particular piece of land, but did not take it.

Peace Now political secretary Moshe Raz, at the forefront of the fight against building at Har Homa, said he does not know anything about the purchase, but added that it is of only minor significance since Gutnick does not have permission to build on the land.

DEBATE

Continued from Page 1

WHERE TO GO

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SPORTS

in brief

Springbok tests positive for banned substance

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - A Springbok player has tested positive for the use of a banned substance, it was announced yesterday by the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU).

A news release from SARFU refused to name the player, but a report on a South African radio station named Northern Transvaal lock forward Johan Ackermann as the player in question.

The player has asked for a second test of his sample, and SARFU will only take further action once the result is known, probably in 14 days. If the second test is positive, the player could face a ban of up to two years.

De Giamville suffers Lions rejection

LONDON (Reuters) - England captain Phil de Giamville and compatriots Tony Underwood and Jon Sleightholme have been left out of the initial 62-man British Lions training squad for this year's tour of South Africa.

Twenty-seven Englishmen were named yesterday to attend a training session in Birmingham next month, with the final squad of 35 being announced on April 2.

But with de Giamville ignored and Will Carling unavailable, none of the three-quarter line involved in England's record 46-6 win over Ireland on Saturday have been chosen.

There are also six former rugby league players, headed by Scott Gibbs and Scott Quinnell who are among 13 Welshmen nominated. Thirteen Irishmen and a mere nine Scots complete the squad.

The captaincy issue remains unresolved, with increasing calls for a test skipper to be named only once the team has arrived in South Africa.

Amokachi in trouble for visiting sick mother

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - Istanbul's Besiktas will punish Nigerian striker Daniel Amokachi after a trip home to visit his sick mother almost made him miss a key match and left the soccer club with a big bill for hiring a private plane.

According to newspaper reports yesterday, Besiktas spent £11,000 (\$17,820) on hiring a plane to bring Amokachi back for the match with Fenerbahce after he missed a flight connection from London on his way back from Nigeria.

Besiktas fans at their home stadium cheered rapturously when told over the loudspeakers that Amokachi had arrived half an hour before kick-off.

He put in an under-par performance in the match, which Besiktas, fourth in the Turkish first division and one place behind Fenerbahce, won 1-0.

Gordon wins Daytona 500

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Reuters) - Jeff Gordon became the youngest driver in history to win the Daytona 500, leading his two Hendricks Motorsports teammates to a 1-2-3 finish on Sunday in America's biggest stock car race.

The 25-year-old Gordon, who won the 1995 NASCAR Winston Cup series championship, took the checkered flag under caution ahead of defending series champion Terry Labonte and Ricky Craven, all of whom drive Chevrolets for owner Rick Hendricks.

USA TODAY/CNN Top 25

Rank	Team	Record	Points	Losses
1	Kansas (28)	25-1	748	1
2	Minnesota (2)	22-2	701	3
3	Kentucky	22-3	684	4
4	Wake Forest	20-3	681	2
5	Utah	19-3	612	5
6	Duke	21-5	593	7
7	Clemson	20-5	561	6
8	Iowa State	18-4	503	9
9	S. Carolina	18-6	499	13
10	New Mexico	20-4	459	12
11	Cincinnati	19-5	417	8
12	Arizona	18-6	412	11
13	Maryland	19-6	385	10
14	N. Carolina	17-6	355	17
15	Louisville	19-5	310	15
16	Michigan	17-7	302	14
17	Xavier	18-4	231	18
18	Villanova	18-7	195	18
19	UCLA	15-7	192	25
20	Colorado	17-7	165	16
21	Illinois	18-7	134	21
22	Stanford	15-6	117	22
23	Texas Tech	15-7	74	20
24	Col. of Calif.	22-2	69	NR
25	Indiana	20-7	59	NR

DROPPED OUT: No. 23 Tulane (16-9); No. 24 Tulsa (19-7)

OTHER VOTING: Tulane 41, New Orleans 32, Tulane 30, Providence 26, Hawaii 19, California 18, Boston College 17, Northern Arizona 17, Illinois State 14, Princeton 14, Georgia 11, Pacific 9, South Alabama 9, St. Joseph's (Pa.) 9, Iowa 5, Mississippi 5, North Carolina-Charlotte 5, Texas 4, Massachusetts 3.

Prosecution rejects Senna debris claim

BOLOGNA (Reuters) - An Italian public prosecutor yesterday dismissed suggestions that debris on the Imola race track may have caused the death of Brazilian Formula One driver Ayrton Senna.

Prosecutor Maurizio Passarini, who is leading investigations into the fatal crash at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix, said he still believed that Senna's Williams team was to blame for the accident.

The Sunday Times published a photograph at the weekend showing a small piece of debris in the path of Senna's car moments before it crashed into a wall.

Passarini dismissed the paper's suggestion that the Brazilian might have died because he lost control of his Williams car after trying to avoid the unidentified fragment.

"Even if the photograph is admitted, it won't change our opinion, which has indicated that the snapped steering column caused the accident," he was quoted as saying.



Around the world in 105 days

Frenchman Christophe Auguin sailed to victory yesterday in the dramatic Vendée Globe solo round-the-world-race marked by risky rescues and the disappearance of Canadian sailor Gerry Rous. The disaster-prone 23,112-nautical mile race made headlines after three vessels, including that of Briton Tony Bullimore, capsized in remote Antarctic seas last January, stretching the Australian Navy rescue service to the limit. After 105 days and 20 hours alone on his 18-meter vessel Geodis, Auguin reached the western French resort of Les-Sables-d'Olonne at 0833 GMT, breaking the 109-day race record set in 1989 by another Frenchman, Titouan Lamazou. Dozens of yachts escorted Auguin, 37, as he crossed the finishing line for a 400,000-franc (\$73,000) prize, and tens of thousands of cheering people lined the banks as he sailed slowly into port. Only seven of the 16 competitors are still in the race, which skirts southern Africa and rounds Antarctica clockwise towards Cape Horn in lonely, towering seas often peppered with icebergs.

(Reuters)

Rusedski quits with bad wrist against Sampras

SAN JOSE, Ca. (Reuters) - Briton Greg Rusedski's dream of knocking-off America's three top players in consecutive matches ended Sunday when he retired in tears with a wrist injury in the final of the Sybase Open tennis tournament.

Rusedski, who had been icing his sore wrist all week, retired at 6-3, 0-5 against top-seed Pete Sampras and blamed tennis officials for his injury, which he said occurred because they used different weights of balls in tournaments.

Rusedski, the seventh seed, said his wrist began hurting him on Sunday morning and gradually got worse during the match.

While attempting a forehand passing shot at down 0-40, 0-3 in the second set, Rusedski grimaced in pain as his racket flew out of his hand.

At 0-5 and 0-30 down, Rusedski walked up the net and called it quits. He then broke down crying.

"If I'm not 100 percent that's no point in continuing," Rusedski said. "It's no good to continue to play and lose 6-0, 6-0. There's no value to the crowd or my wrist."

An ATP official said Rusedski has sustained a strained ligament in wrist.

After the match, Rusedski lashed out at the ATP Tour for not standardising ball weights at various tournaments.

"You play one week with a Slazenger, which is soft, you play with an ATP Tour ball, then you play with a hard Wilson ball," Rusedski said.

"They've got to do something about this because it's causing players arm and wrist problems. They've got to make some sense out of this and standardize one single ball," Sampras disagreed.

"I think the tournaments do a good job with the balls," Sampras said. "I haven't had any arm problems in two years."

The only time I've complained was at the Australian, when the balls were soft and flat.

"I think Greg's problem is that serving at 139 mph (223.6 kph) can't be good for your arm. He serves so hard with so much wrist that it's not surprising he had a problem."

A number of tennis observers believe that light rackets are a contributing factor to arm injuries. While Sampras is capable of hitting a serve 132 mph (212.4), he mostly keeps his serves in the 120s (193 kph) and uses a 385-gram racket, significantly heavier than Rusedski's 365-gram frame.

A ranking of rackets used by the ATP Tour's top 10 players: 1. Pete Sampras (U.S.) 5767 points, 2. Thomas Muster (Austria) 3709, 3. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia) 3452, 4. Michael Chang (U.S.) 3413, 5. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia) 3367, 6. Marcelo Rios (Chile) 2413, 7. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands) 2393, 8. Thomas Enqvist (Sweden) 2267, 9. Wayne Ferreira (South Africa) 2243, 10. Carlos Moyca (Spain) 2217.

11. Andre Agassi (U.S.) 1857, 12. Boris Becker (Germany) 1592, 13. Todd Martin (U.S.) 1573, 14. Albert Costa (Spain) 1571, 15. Jim Courier (U.S.) 1433, 16. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 1404, 17. Magnus Larsson (Sweden) 1377, 18. The Harems (Britain) 1354, 19. Michael Stich (Germany) 1316.

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Hapoel Jerusalem hoping to fend off Fenerbahce

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Hapoel Jerusalem will be out to make history tonight in Istanbul when they take on Turkey's Fenerbahce in European Cup competition.

Hapoel brings a 13-point advantage into the matchup which Jerusalem fans are hoping will be enough against the Turks. However, the 12,000 Turkish fans expected to fill the arena are sure to do their utmost to see that the lead coach Gadi Kedari's club so valiantly earned in Jerusalem simply disappears in Istanbul.

Jerusalem's 91-78 victory was achieved largely through the outstanding play of Hapoel's backcourt duo of Papi Turgeman and Adi Gordon. Turgeman in particular had success in posting up on his man under the basket, and also was hot from beyond the three-point stripe, finishing with 24 points. Gordon also hit some clutch baskets, and Jerusalem will again hope for a major contribution from the pair.

Meanwhile, Dan Bingenheimer will be expected to again put the body on Fenerbahce's big man, Dallas Comegys, and a team effort will be needed to stop Henry Turner, who is capable of scoring at will when he's got his game going.

Jerusalem will also have to find an answer to the shooting of guard Ibrahim Kutluoglu, who had 22 points in the second half alone in Jerusalem.

If Hapoel plays in Istanbul as they did on the road in Ulm, Germany earlier this European Cup season, it will make history and advance to the quarterfinals.

If the club then manages to advance to the semifinals, Kedari's men will also earn Israel a bonus - another representative in the European next season.

The game will be broadcast live starting at 19:50 on Channel 5.

In other news, Hapoel Elit beat host Maccabi Herzliya 94-82 in a National Basketball League game last night. Amir Katz led Elit with 23 points.

National Basketball League

Team	W	L	Pct.
Maccabi Tel Aviv	14	0	20
Hapoel Elit	8	1	22
Hapoel Jerusalem	6	5	21
Gali Eyon	7	6	20
Maccabi Ramat Gan	6	8	20
Maccabi Rishon	6	8	20
Givat Shimon	6	8	20
Bnei Herzliya	6	8	20
Maccabi Rishon	5	8	18
Hapoel Holon	5	8	18
Hapoel Tel Aviv	4	10	18

Triple Olympic swimming champ could be banned

LONDON (AP) - Irish swimmer Michelle Smith, who won three gold medals and a bronze at the Atlanta Olympics, is one "no-show" away from a possible four-year ban for failure to make herself available for drug testing.

Smith was absent when a team of drug testers turned up at her home in Ireland four months ago.

The penalty for refusing a dope test is a four-year ban, the same sanction as for testing positive.

LOCAL SCENE

Halika smashes swimming records

By HEATHER CHAIT

Mickey Halika was one stroke ahead of the other swimmers at the national championships (short course pool) at Kiryat Bialik over the weekend.

Halika won seven gold medals and also set a new record in the 1,500 meters freestyle. His time of 15:22:08 slashed 4.2 seconds off his own previous record.

Among Halika's other gold medals were the 200m individual medley in 2:07.95, the 400m individual medley in 4:18.86, the 400m freestyle in 3:53.86 and the 200m butterfly in 2:04.87.

Halika also won two team medals, swimming for Hapoel Jerusalem, which walked off with the best men and women's team awards.

Among the women, Lital Kashriel was chosen as best swimmer with her three gold medals and two silver while Anya Gostemelsky won four gold medals.

Track: Sprinter Kfir Golan has set two national indoor records in just one week. Last week in Budapest, he broke Itai Iluz's time of 6.91 seconds in the 60 meters, finishing in 6.84.

This week in Vienna, Golan improved on that, clocking 6.83. Also in Vienna, Philip Feingold finished the 400m in 49.90 and Rogel Nahum placed second in the triple jump, with 16.68m.

Handball: Local police are currently investigating the suspicion

that Russian prostitutes gained entry into Israel on the guise of being imported to play handball here. After the body of Marina Kabayayba was found near Rishon LeZion, records had it that she was a player for Hapoel Petah Tikva. Police suspect that an agent who imported women players, forged forms from the local handball union when requesting that the foreign players be allowed to play here. Using a legitimate form, the agent, known to the police, would delete the name and replace it with that of the not-so-sporty woman he wished to import for a very type of recreational activity.

Gold: Richard Fogelson and Arich Gresco won the A division of this week's individual stableford event at Caesarea's golf course. Behind their 39 points were Basil Kaufman on 34. In the B division Chuck Shaikowitz won with 37 points with Boaz Balakha on 36. Gerald Kessler also had 36 but suffered with an inferior back nine.

Police to question Netanyahu today

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to be questioned today by police in the alleged "Bar-On for Hebron" affair. He will be asked to trace how Roni Bar-On's appointment as attorney-general came about and whether anyone pressured or threatened him regarding the appointment.

The investigation stems from the Channel 1 report several weeks ago that

Shas MK Aryeh Deri agreed to support the Hebron redeployment agreement, if Bar-On was appointed attorney-general and arranged a plea bargain in his fraud trial.

Investigators have prepared dozens of questions for the prime minister, and sources close to the investigation said the questioning could take hours and may even last more than one day.

Along with recalling the circumstances of Bar-On's nomination, Netanyahu will

be asked why the proposal to nominate attorney Dan A. Yitzhak as attorney-general was rejected, and Bar-On's nomination pursued instead. A. Yitzhak is representing Deri in his ongoing fraud trial in Jerusalem District Court.

It will probably take several more weeks to complete the investigation due to the volume of evidence that must be reviewed, police sources said. Police have a general picture of the circumstances that led to the appointment and know who was

lobbying for it, but there is apparently still no evidence to support the allegation made by Channel 1.

There is, however, evidence reportedly supporting suspicions that some of those involved in the affair committed fraud and breach of trust. Sources said Deri and others lobbied to have Bar-On appointed, and had expressed at various times a desire to see Bar-On in the post so as to further their personal interests. It is still not clear, though, whether there is

sufficient evidence to support an indictment.

Bar-On was questioned by police for several hours yesterday, the second time he has been questioned.

Israel Bar Association head Dror Hoter-Yishai was also questioned intensively on his involvement in the affair. Businessman David Appel, who has also been questioned, is said to have told police that Hoter-Yishai was the first to suggest Bar-On for the post.

Ness Ziona fears bio hazard

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Residents of Ness Ziona are worried the nearby Biological Institute is presenting a risk to the town and want it removed.

The newly formed Knesset Science Committee is to be briefed today by the head of the institute on the facility.

In 1994, a French newspaper reported that the institute was manufacturing 43 types of biological and other non-conventional weapons.

Marcus Klingberg, convicted of spying for the former Soviet Union while deputy head of the institute in 1983, reportedly revealed information that Israel

was using the institute to prepare for biological warfare.

His case was only revealed in 1993.

Deputy committee chairman MK Rafi Elul confirmed that he has been approached with requests not to hold the hearing because it may harm state security.



Mexican FM discusses cooperation

Mexican Foreign Minister Jose Angel de Gurría and his wife Lulu walk by shops in Jerusalem's Old City yesterday. After concluding two days of meetings with Israeli officials, Gurría expressed confidence that ties between the two countries have strengthened. Before leaving today, Gurría will visit Hebron where he will meet with senior Palestinian officials and discuss possible cooperation.

(Photo: David Makovsky; Photo: AP)

Egypt to try Azzam on charges of spying

CAIRO (Reuters) - Egypt will

put on trial detained Israeli Azzam and three other people on charges of spying for Israel and damaging Egypt's national interests, official sources said yesterday.

The others are 34-year-old Egyptian Emad Abdelhamid Ismail and two Israeli women who are not in Egypt - Mona Ahmed Shawahna and Zahra Youssef Greis.

Azzam, who was working at an Israeli-owned textile factory in Cairo, was detained in November.

Israel has said he is innocent and

has appealed for his release.

The charge sheet says Ismail agreed to help the two women to spy for the Mossad. One of the women, with whom he was having an affair, gave Ismail \$650 when he was recruited and the other offered him \$1,000, the charge sheet said.

Azzam's role in the espionage case was to deliver to Ismail women's underwear inscribed with invisible ink.

The prosecution has not said what kind of information Israel was seeking.

A date for the trial has not yet been set.

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The Israel Electric Corporation wishes to purchase the following goods/services:

TENDER	DESCRIPTION	Cost of tender documents, inc. VAT (non-refundable)
591342	Writing of Instruction Manuals for New Consumerism System Stage A - Submission of technical/commercial details, without prices Participation conditions: The electric corporation will not consider a bid, unless the bidder fulfills all of the following criteria: 1. Participation in a meeting of suppliers to be held at the Meeting Hall, Mezzanine Level, 5 Rehov Hanegav, Tel Aviv, is compulsory. The meeting will be held on March 4, 1997, at 10 a.m. For queries, etc., please call Mr. Moshe Zorger, Tel. 03-587-8191/224. Identity cards needed to enter meeting. Any bid by a supplier who has not participated in the meeting will not be considered. 2. Bids involving sub-contractors will not be considered. The work in its entirety must be performed exclusively by the bidder. 3. Responses must be according to the MFTM standard. 4. Experience of the company in preparing instruction manuals: the company must have had experience in preparing instruction manuals for at least 5 projects in the area of computerized data systems. Please enclose at least one instruction manual from one of the projects executed. 5. The supplier must submit a written statement that the company has sufficient manpower to enable the simultaneous preparation (writing and production) of four instruction manuals. The supplier must enclose a list of workers capable of executing the above simultaneously.	NIS 351
585884	Single core extruded cross-linked Polyethylene instrumentation cables and thermocouple extension cables, Type "E," with EFTE (Tefzel) insulation and F.R. PVC 1050 C jacket. Pre-condition: Compliance with ISO Standard 9002 Period of contract: two years, with option for four additional years.	NIS 1755
585885	Low/Medium voltage power & lighting/control cables with XLPE insulation and fire retardant PVC jacket Pre-condition: compliance with ISO Standard 9002 Period of contract: two years with option for four additional years	NIS 2925
588834	Control cables for 0.6/1KV WITE XLPE insulation and F.R. PVC jacket Pre-condition: compliance with ISO Standard 9002 Period of contract: two years with option for four additional years	NIS 1989

Last date for submitting bids: March 24, 1997, at 11 a.m.

Correction: In the announcement published in yesterday's paper (February 17, 1997), there was an incorrect tender number. The correct number is: 592704, Contract for the Provision of Hotel Services for Corporation Employees on Courses

Other Preliminary Conditions:

- Participation in a tender is subject to compliance with the preliminary conditions detailed in the Tender Regulations 1993, Par. 6 (a) 1, 2, 3 (i.e., registration as required by law, compliance with mandatory specifications, and the holding of permits required by law for businesses).
- If a bidder does not attach any particular document or permit, license or any other required material, as required by the preliminary conditions, the Electric Corporation may allow the bidder to submit the missing material within a period of time to be set by the Corporation.

The tender documents may be obtained, Sunday - Thursday, at the Market Research and Tenders Dept., 11 Sderot Pal-Yam, Haifa, between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, on submission of a receipt demonstrating payment (non-refundable) of the cost of the documents to the Corporation's account at the Postal Bank. Payment slips may be obtained by calling Tel. 04-861-5455/4.

Before purchasing the tender documents, they may be perused at the Market Research and Tenders Dept. at the above address, or at the Sales Unit, Ashdod Building, Entrance C, Floor 1, 90 Rehov Yigal Alon, Tel Aviv, Tel. 03-565-4679, 03-565-4641, Sunday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 noon. Bids should be submitted in a sealed envelope and placed in Tenders Box No. 1 in the Pal-Yam building, Haifa (above address) by the last date for submitting bids, as stated above.

No undertaking is given to accept the lowest or any bid.
NOTE: In appropriate cases, the Electric Corporation will give preference to suppliers, in accordance with the Tender Regulations (Preference for Locally Produced Goods, and Obligation to Extend Commercial Cooperation).

The Electric Corporation retains the right to negotiate, where this is legally permissible.

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